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# CITIZEN CO-OPERATION FOR BETTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## *The Fifty-third Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*

### PART I

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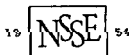
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The general plan developed by the yearbook committee for the preparation and review of the several chapters comprising the text of this volume is explained by the chairman of the committee in the closing paragraphs of chapter i. The authors of the various chapters desire to express their appreciation for the interest of those persons who read the manuscripts in tentative form and offered valuable suggestions and criticisms. These acknowledgments are presented in the following lists so as to identify each reviewer with the particular chapter which was referred to him.

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## Editor's Preface

The concept of the American public school as a community enterprise has long been dutifully recognized by educators and other citizens of both urban and rural areas. Only recently, however, has there been an appropriate recognition on the part of educators of the resource-use value of the general population in the field of public school education. By the same token, it has been clear to see that citizens who were not regularly employed by the schools have but rarely usurped or coveted the responsibilities or prerogatives of the teaching staff. The conspicuous trend of the present generation of teachers and patrons of the common schools is toward a common-ground basis of shared responsibility for the promotion of educational progress in community, state, and nation.

The National Society for the Study of Education has already taken cognizance of the movement toward a more effectual integration of the social services of the school and those of organized society at large. Three of our recent yearbooks, particularly, have placed considerable emphasis on the values of school-community co-operation in furthering the aims of the particular type of program or the particular educational objectives with which the yearbook is concerned. The titles of these yearbooks are: *Education in Rural Communities*, published in 1952; *The Community School* and *Adapting the Secondary-School Program to the Needs of Youth*, published in 1953.

The theme of the present yearbook is clearly indicated by the title, *Citizen Co-operation for Better Public Schools*. The members of the yearbook committee and their associated contributors have given full expression to the underlying motives of this conception of school management, illustrating and interpreting the processes and outcomes of co-operative endeavor in a variety of social settings. The values of the yearbook for teachers and school administrators are vouchsafed by the distinguished coterie of contributors to the yearbook, the advisers chosen by the yearbook committee, and the procedures employed by the committee in the preparation of the

volume. Names of the participating personnel are listed on pages v-xi. Professor Morphet, chairman of the Society's committee, has explained the procedures on page 10. In addition to the value of this publication as a contribution to the professional literature of its field, the yearbook was prepared with the view of making it useful to lay citizens also, especially those who are participating in community-improvement programs that will directly or indirectly benefit the schools.

From the point of view of the purposes of this yearbook, it is not without significance that Mr. Roy E. Larsen, Chairman of the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, accepted the invitation of the Board of Directors to become a member of the yearbook committee. The Board appreciates Mr. Larsen's generous gesture of confidence in the aims and the services of the Society. It is a pleasure to record here our own impression that the work of the National Citizens Commission is being acknowledged throughout the nation as notable evidence of the value of *Citizen Co-operation for Better Public Schools*.

NELSON B. HENRY

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*"More and more responsible citizens, men and women from every walk of life, every political persuasion, every profession or occupation, every religious faith and every social group, are joining with their neighbors to work for the good of their schools. This spirit of community co-operation and participation is an exciting thing to see and it is producing exciting results for the community as a whole as well as for the schools."*—ROY E. LARSEN, "The Fight for Better Schools, 1826-1952," in WALTER HINES PAGE, *The School That Built a Town* (Harper & Bros., 1952).



## CHAPTER I

### *Introduction*

EDGAR L. MORPHET

#### *Purpose and Scope of Yearbook*

The purpose of the yearbook is to explain the importance and the role of citizen co-operation in public school education. Consideration is given to the background and need for such co-operation, to major problems and issues, to some of the more significant current developments and their implications, and to suggestions for improving co-operation in the future.

#### MEANING OF CITIZEN CO-OPERATION

In the literature of this field of study, the terms *lay citizen* and *educator* are sometimes used with a sort of competitive connotation, as though there were a natural rivalry or antagonism in the viewpoints of such persons and in their personal relationship to the social objectives of a system of education they both approve and support. The terms are not so used in this yearbook. In education as well as in religion, law, medicine, and many other professional fields, there has been from time to time some tendency toward a "revolt against authority," which means that citizens in general have not always been willing to accept without question the decisions or the pronouncements of the professionals. This tendency does not imply a conflict in interests or purposes but rather a feeling that, since everyone is interested in the welfare of the schools, educators should not attempt to dominate public opinion about the schools. What people seem to want is an opportunity to help think through and decide on policies which are of such vital interest to them.

Educators and other citizens alike are concerned about public education. These concerns are *common* concerns which provide the

basis for co-operation, although they may, under certain circumstances, set the stage for conflict.

#### SOME LIMITATIONS

The term *lay citizens* will be used in this discussion to apply to all persons who are not presently employed in the public schools. In general, these lay citizens have not been specifically trained as educators. The professional personnel of the schools, although comprising primarily teachers, supervisors, administrators, and other educators who are currently employed in public school work, include also other employees of the schools such as custodians, secretaries, and school bus drivers. Throughout the text, *co-operation* is interpreted to mean working together for a common purpose. Thus, citizen co-operation for better public schools envisages all types of co-operation—individual and group, informal and formal—between lay citizens and educational personnel in relationship to the public school program.

Although citizen co-operation is considered broadly in this yearbook and an attempt is made to cover all aspects of co-operative endeavor, more attention is given to group relationships than to individual activities. Perhaps that is desirable. By and large, individual citizens know how to discuss public school matters with other individuals whether they are educators or not. Unfortunately such discussions between professional people and those who are not professionally identified with the schools frequently do not probe deeply into underlying problems and issues. In many cases terminology constitutes an obstacle which needs to be overcome. When groups are involved, the difficulties seem, as a rule, to be greater. Preconceived notions, terminology, and a lack of understanding of the group process tend to get in the way of satisfactory co-operation. Yet much can be accomplished by group effort when it functions properly.

In Section II of the yearbook, illustrations are given of citizen co-operation in action. For this purpose, only a limited number of the most appropriate examples obtained by the authors have been used. Since most of the "case" reports are based on information provided by individuals connected with the co-operative enterprise mentioned, these illustrations may overemphasize certain aspects

of the situation described or may fail to give adequate attention to others.

During the early stages of its work, the yearbook committee considered the possibility of including all phases of *public education* in the treatment of this problem. It soon became apparent, however, that space limitations would not permit adequate consideration of the entire field, so it was decided to center attention on public school education, with some consideration of those activities of state colleges and universities which are most directly related to public school programs, such as teacher and administrator education. There are, of course, many illustrations of successful co-operative projects in connection with nonpublic schools at all levels, but these are not reported in this yearbook because the center of interest here is the public schools.

### *Citizen Interests in Public Schools*

Parents are naturally interested in the education of their children. They want to know who is doing the teaching, what is being taught, and how well it is being taught. As long as they assume that things are going well, parents generally have little to say. But when uncertainties arise about the progress of their own children or about the public school program in general, their anxiety is usually freely expressed, and there can be no doubt about their interest.

Likewise, most citizens are interested in the educational program as taxpayers, whether or not they have children in school. Support for the common schools and public colleges must be provided through taxation. While most persons recognize expenditures for education as an investment in future citizens, a few seem to be concerned chiefly with immediate problems involving personal and family finance and have difficulty in recognizing long-range values.

Thus, all citizens are, as individuals, actually or potentially interested in the public schools. Most of them believe in public schools and are interested on that account. Most of them seem to want the best public school program that can be provided within reasonable limits. Many lay citizens have been co-operating with teachers, principals, and other school personnel in an effort to resolve problems and to effect improvements. Even so, there are some in almost every

community who have had no direct contact with the public schools and have shown no special interest in them.

#### MAN Y GROUPS INTERESTED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Frequently individuals with common interests in education have organized into groups to study and support or oppose some phase of the public school program. Many of these groups have endeavored to improve the schools or to defend the schools against unwarranted attacks; others have sought only to find defects. Some groups have sought to work with professional personnel; others have insisted on working independently.

During the past few years there has been increased interest in the relation of citizens to the program of public education. A National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools has been organized. Committees or commissions of citizens have been established in a number of local school systems in practically every state to sponsor or conduct more or less comprehensive studies of educational problems. Similar studies of education at the state level have been carried on in Florida, New Hampshire, Indiana, North Carolina, Texas, Missouri, and Utah. "Citizens advisory committees" have been created in several states and in hundreds of communities throughout the nation to help with problems ranging from salary schedules to school plant planning. Many local, state, and national organizations have established education committees of one kind or another. Membership in parent-teacher associations and similar groups has greatly increased. Numerous articles, pamphlets, and books have been devoted to these developments.

#### PROBLEMS OF INTEREST TO CITIZENS

Experience seems to indicate that citizens generally are interested in almost every aspect of the public school program at local, state, and national levels. Educators have sometimes said that the public should be concerned about *what* the schools are doing but should leave the matter of *how* it is to be done to school people. In practice, however, there seems to be no such clear-cut distinction. Citizens really want to know *how* the work of the schools is being carried on as well as what the schools are doing. They usually are interested in the reasons for doing things one way instead of another

which they would consider more logical or more desirable. *What* is to be done through the schools is, in the final analysis, to be decided by the people themselves.

Problems on which citizens have worked in local and state school systems range from those relating to organization and administration, through instruction, and on to finance. There seems to be no limit to questions that are raised for consideration. Some of them are broad and basic; others are limited and of minor significance in relation to the entire school program. All of these questions are, *however, important to the persons by whom they are asked*, and the procedure for arriving at satisfactory answers is important for the entire school program.

Some of the more searching questions relating to the schools are: Are the schools doing a better job of teaching than they did a generation ago? Are the children really learning the fundamentals? Are *moral and spiritual values being neglected*? Are the children with superior intelligence being given proper attention? Do all children really need a high-school education? Are the schools teaching children to be good American citizens? Since taxes are so high, can we afford to provide more funds for school support?

Many questions are also being asked about lay participation in the affairs of the schools. Some of the more common questions are: Why can't the school people run the schools? Do educators think other people aren't interested in what the schools do for their children? How can we find the time needed to work on school problems? What can an individual citizen do to bring about needed improvements? What can a citizens committee do that cannot be done by a parent-teacher association? Do the school people want help or do they want a group to "rubber stamp" their ideas? What assurance do we have that the board will act favorably on our recommendations?

Some more general questions are frequently raised: When is a person or group helpful and when harmful? When should groups *work independently*? Are the *most critical groups really trying to help the public schools or to destroy them*? What assurance is there that some independent groups will not attempt to control the school program for their own ends?

### *Kinds of Citizen Co-operation*

To many people, the term *citizen co-operation* may suggest merely the activities of "citizens advisory" committees or parent-teacher associations. In this yearbook, however, the term is used broadly and is intended to encompass all kinds of co-operation involving lay citizens.

#### INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP CO-OPERATION

In practically every school system there is considerable co-operation or at least some contact every day between individual parents and teachers and between other citizens and members of the school staff. Often the pupils themselves are involved either directly or indirectly. On the state level the relations may be between educators and legislators or representatives of some state agency. The problems solved or the matters cleared up frequently seem to be relatively minor; yet successful and satisfying relations of this kind are of basic importance in the entire school program. They provide the necessary background and setting for further satisfactory developments.

Many of the co-operative relations are between some individual and a group. These include the co-operation between the superintendent (local or state) and his board, between individual members of the school staff and such groups as civic clubs or study groups, and between individual citizens and school groups, particularly school classes. All these relationships may be found on local, state, and national levels. They are important because they are likely to determine the general impression about the schools and school personnel. Successful relationships of this kind are essential for a satisfactory school program and are basic to other forms of co-operation.

In most state and local school systems, and to some extent on regional and national levels, groups have been organized for the purpose of working on problems connected with the schools. Some of these include only lay people; others include both laymen and educators. Some are concerned with studies of the school program or certain aspects of it; others with interpretation; and still others with the promotion of or with opposition to certain ideas or proposals.

The parent-teacher association is an excellent illustration of a citizens group which is interested in helping the schools and is found in nearly every school system. Advisory committees for vocational and adult classes and for specific aspects of the school program are rather common. During the past few years citizens committees<sup>1</sup> or citizens advisory committees have been organized in many state and local school systems. Some of these have served for short periods; others operate on a continuing basis. Some have functioned quite satisfactorily; others have encountered difficulties. This yearbook, particularly Section II, gives some illustrations of all kinds of citizen co-operation for better schools.

#### INFORMAL AND FORMAL ORGANIZATION

Many of the activities which are related to citizen co-operation are quite informal. Parents and other citizens contact teachers or other members of the school staff to discuss matters of common concern, teachers work with parents on matters pertaining to the classroom, and study or advisory groups grow out of these mutual interests.

Other activities are somewhat more formal. The parent-teacher association has a definite plan of organization as well as definitely stated policies for working with the schools. A state legislature or a local board of public education may formally authorize the organization of a committee or study group. The working relations between the superintendent and the board are usually prescribed by law, even though the actual relations at times may appear quite informal.

#### LEVELS OF CO-OPERATION

There have been many levels and degrees of co-operation. In some cases the formalities of co-operation have been observed, but the attitude and spirit of the participants have been just the opposite of what is implied by the term co-operation.

Educators have sometimes decided on the answer or solution they consider appropriate for a particular problem and then have asked

1. The writers of this yearbook prefer and will generally use in this volume the term *citizens committee* or *citizens study committee* rather than *citizens advisory committee*. While most committees are necessarily advisory in nature, it is believed the emphasis should be on the *study* approach to problems and that the advisory functions should grow out of and be based on study rather than mere discussion.

other citizens to help sell their plan to the public. Similarly, such citizen groups as legislatures and school boards have sometimes made a decision without consulting school people, expecting the educators to implement the decision on the assumption that a good program of education will result.

In many situations co-operation has been genuine and of the highest order. Both school personnel and other citizens have developed mutual respect and have learned that each has a contribution to make. Both have benefited by the association. *Citizen co-operation is on the highest level when it challenges the best and most conscientious efforts of capable people who believe in the importance of public school education, who proceed on the basis of careful studies, and who seek to make the public schools the best possible educational institution for American life.*

### Point of View

#### BASIC PHILOSOPHY

The writers of this yearbook believe that public school education—what it does for people, and what happens to it—is of fundamental importance in American life. They also believe that the best possible program of public school education is essential if our American way of life is to continue to be improved.

The writers of this yearbook further believe that in America the public schools “belong to the people.” This means that citizens with different ideas have an important role to play in determining educational policy. There are, however, certain things professional educators can and should do, and there are still other services that can be performed satisfactorily only when educators and other citizens work together co-operatively.

Citizen co-operation is essential for the development and proper functioning of a satisfactory program of public education. The *idea* is fundamental. How it can best be implemented under all conditions we do not yet know; but some of the basic principles and criteria have already emerged, and still others are on the verge of being recognized. These are indicated in chapter x.

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CO-OPERATION

Citizen co-operation is not a panacea for all the ills of the schools. It will not solve all problems and cannot be used as a substitute for



intelligence or good hard individual work. In fact co-operation involves problems of its own, as pointed out in chapter iv, that must be solved if satisfactory results are to be attained. There are always probabilities of misunderstandings and misinterpretations that may negate the best efforts of many conscientious persons, but these can be avoided if the proper procedures are adopted.

Co-operative enterprise should be viewed as a voluntary effort to discover and understand problems and to bring about needed improvements on the basis of intelligent study and planning. It should result in a better educational program than could be developed by educators alone. It should be used when the advantages of co-operation outweigh the advantages of other procedures.

At its best, a co-operative project should result in better understanding of the educational problems and issues under consideration. Those who participate in co-operative projects have an opportunity to help determine needs and propose improvements and, consequently, may be expected to support intelligently and enthusiastically the program they have helped to develop.

### *Organization and Preparation of the Yearbook*

This yearbook is divided into three sections. Section I, comprising three chapters, deals with the social and economic factors in American life that have tended to make citizen co-operation increasingly important through the years. Significant historical developments based on community co-operation are summarized, and some of the problems and issues which must be faced are discussed.

Section II has five chapters which are devoted to co-operative projects in individual classrooms, in individual schools, in local school systems, in the state, and at the national level, respectively. Numerous illustrations of various kinds of co-operative effort are presented, and their implications for the various levels on which educational programs operate are explained.

In Section III, which comprises three chapters, an effort is made to propose principles and criteria which may be used for guidance in planning co-operative programs, to appraise and evaluate the significance of some of the developments in co-operative procedures, and to suggest some procedures that need to be utilized if co-operation is to attain its highest levels and to result in optimum benefits for public school education and for American life.

Early in its deliberations the yearbook committee adopted the point of view that the procedure used in developing a yearbook on citizen co-operation in public school education should be consistent with the underlying philosophy of democratic action in the administration of public services and should exemplify some important aspects of co-operative enterprise.

After the general plans had been agreed upon, persons who have been interested in the problem and have had extensive experience in the field were selected as contributors. These authors in turn were encouraged to obtain contributions from a wide variety of sources. Credit for contributions used is given through appropriate footnotes in the yearbook, but the committee wishes especially at this time to recognize the value of the many splendid contributions and to express appreciation therefor.

Plans were also made to have the tentative draft of each chapter reviewed by two or three professional educators and by at least two citizens selected from the membership of the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the National School Boards Association, or state and local citizens committees. These reviewers were asked to point out strong and weak points and to make suggestions for improving the treatment. Practically everyone invited to serve in this capacity responded cordially and helpfully.

Through the co-operation of the *National Citizens Commission* for the Public Schools arrangements were made for a discussion of the general plan and idea of the yearbook at the annual assembly of the Commission held at Denver, Colorado, January 30 and 31, 1953. At this meeting many valuable proposals were made with resulting benefit to the entire plan. In fact, the yearbook committee is particularly indebted to the National Citizens Commission for its splendid co-operation and assistance throughout the preparation of this volume.

**SECTION I**  
**BACKGROUND AND ISSUES**

## CHAPTER II

### *The Changing Scene Requires Co-operation*

J. C. MOFFITT

The history of America is one of change. The more recent its history, the greater the speed with which the country has moved from one important event to the next. While the nature of change cannot be accurately predicted, we are reasonably certain that new changes will occur and that each change will have some effect on the society in which we live.

Life for the American people, therefore, presents an unending array of new problems requiring solutions. Inescapably, we live in the present but rely on the past for knowledge and experience. Natural differences in ability to accept "change" and to direct it for the advantage of all tend to produce tensions and cleavages in society which complicate our democratic way of life.

The American people have never fully agreed upon the role of the schools in helping individuals and communities to adjust to the ceaseless parade of changing events. Schools have had different purposes at different times, depending largely upon the "values" recognized by society at a given time. Traditionally, the generally accepted purposes in this country have been rather narrow and somewhat academic in nature. There has been a tendency until recently to consider the schools as relatively static institutions which should be little affected by changes in society and which should have little effect on social change. But a new point of view has been emerging.

During the past few years many lay and educational leaders have proposed that the schools can and should play a much more significant role in our complex world than they have done heretofore. This can be done satisfactorily and safely, however, only if a greatly increased number of people understand the proper role of education

and participate in the continuing determination of its purposes as affected by changing needs.

Citizens in the hundreds of communities across the nation, acting co-operatively through the medium of the schools, can help provide a basis for resolving many of the issues now unresolved, for relieving many of the tensions that currently exist, and for making the democratic way of life more equitable and meaningful for the entire world.

It is the function of this chapter to describe briefly a few of the significant developments in American life and to indicate some important implications of these changes for the public school program and for ways of solving the educational problems with which we are continually confronted.

### *Significant Changes in American Life*

The first permanent home-builders along the Atlantic seaboard were the product of their European past. Within the world from which he came, the common man had little individual significance or social purpose. Such earlier events as the revival of learning, the religious reformations, and the acceptance of a new scientific attitude left traces of change and suggested a new significance for man's existence, but the effects came slowly.

The rise of the common man in America to a new sense of importance was the result both of forces within the colonies and of influences from Europe. The quest for increased liberty culminating in the French Revolution had an important influence on the freedom-loving people who had finally reached the American shore. The growing scientific attitude possessed by a few people presented only a limited challenge to the older ways of doing and believing. The greatest contributions to the newer life came from America itself. What seemed to be an endless expanding frontier that offered land ownership and new freedoms—freedoms growing partly out of the distance from governing controls—served as a tremendous motivating force for the masses of immigrants to develop a new consciousness of their own liberty and personal importance.<sup>1</sup>

1. Three books which describe the forces within the social order that have interacted with education in the development of the American culture are:

The new era gave birth to the democratic ideal of man as a person and enhanced citizenship responsibilities. With the growth of the new union of states came many issues requiring intelligent analysis. New needs for education began to become apparent, and schools, at first limited to a few, gradually were provided for all.

The right to vote, originally restricted to a small economic group, was gradually extended to include all adult males and, in later times, to include all adult females. Improved education was required by such new problems as the migration to this country of "new" people, the expanding frontier, the creation of new wealth, cheap land, the decreasing influence of a dominant church, the beginning of the factory system in growing cities, change in the status of the family as an independent economic unit, the improvement of transportation and communication, and the rise of the new and independent government.

Every new community established across the continent and every new territory and state admitted to the Union required leadership in all aspects of government. If the ideals of democracy were to survive and flourish, it became apparent that all must have the right to a public school education.

#### IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY

Gradually the concept that each man is the sole master of his own fate in the new nation was modified by new social values as the industrial revolution brought increased interdependence into community life. Advances in technology carried many social and educational implications for all phases of American life. The agrarian economy that placed a premium on "individualism" and freedom from dependence upon others was comparatively short-lived. In time, even the frontier farmer began to find himself in a society with extensive social and commercial commitments.

Something of the magnitude of the economic change and prog-

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Newton Edwards and Herman G. Rievey, *The School in the American Social Order* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1947); *Policies for Education in American Democracy* (Washington: Educational Policies Commission and the American Association of School Administrators, 1946); and George S. Counts, *Education and American Civilization* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1951).

ress that has taken place may be noted from the following statement of Harold G. Moulton:

Some hundred and seventy-five years ago, however, the Western World unleashed a spurt of economic progress such as had never been seen before. How much progress? If recorded history were scaled on the face of a clock, and if the period from the beginning to 1850 were to be represented by the time from midnight until twenty minutes before noon, the last twenty minutes would stand for the remaining century. Yet during that last twenty minutes, economic progress—measured by the increase in the production of one man in one hour—was as great as in the 700 minutes.<sup>2</sup>

The development of power machinery is a most significant aspect of our technological age. Power is created and used in a variety of ways, but a single trend during a recent thirty-year period may be used to show the general growth in power production. In 1920 all public and privately owned companies produced 39,405 million kilowatt-hours; by 1950, 328,998 million kilowatt-hours were produced.<sup>3</sup> One writer says, "Americans increased their annual use of electric energy more between 1940 and 1950 than in the entire previous time since electric power has been installed in America."<sup>4</sup>

A forecast of further change in power production may be noted in the differences of "energy content" per pound of fuel. In "a conventional plant, a pound of coal can be transformed into about one kilowatt-hour of electric power. In a fission-powered plant, a pound of atomic fuel would yield about 2.5 million kilowatt-hours of electric power."<sup>5</sup>

A century ago, approximately 6 per cent of the work was done by machinery. Ninety-four per cent was done by man or beast. Within this hundred years these figures have been reversed. Nine times as many people now work as was the case in 1850, but they produce twenty-three times as many goods and services, yet have more leisure than at any previous period. Each year produces an array of new occupational specializations, older jobs are terminated, new ways of doing the world's work are discovered.

2. Harold G. Moulton, *America's Wealth*, p. 1. Washington: Brookings Institution, 1952.

3. *The Economic Almanac*, 1951-52, p. 348.

4. Fenton B. Turck, "Science on the March," *Scientific Monthly*, LXXV (September, 1952), 187.

5. Sam H. Shurr, "The Economics of Atomic Power," *Scientific American*, CLXXXIV (January, 1951), 32.

- Technological developments in America have already changed the character of the civilization in which we live and have greatly altered the lives and the modes of living of the American people. New sources of power have constituted the basis for many of these differences. Our civilization no longer rests almost entirely on the physical energies of the people but on intelligent development and use of power and power machinery. From a physical point of view, the emphasis is on precision, carefully defined and well ordered relationships, practical applications and values, technological planning, experiment, and rapid change resulting from new knowledge. But this emphasis has brought a multitude of social and cultural maladjustments and problems which are in urgent need of solution.

#### EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Distinctive in the economy of this century, and with broad implications for education, are the rise and development of the large business corporation. In the last century the center of production was moved from the home to the small business establishment or partnership factory. Recently the nation's large industrial corporations have emerged. Writing nearly twenty years ago, Berle and Means singled out one corporation that "controls more wealth than is contained within the borders of twenty-one of the states in the country."<sup>6</sup>

The pooling of capital, the organization of men and materials, the merging of companies, the experimental programs of investigation in industries and universities, and the continuing development of engineering and machinery have expanded industrial America to a position that compels people to think and act differently from the customs which preceded them at any given time.

Perhaps no one at this stage can fully assess the effects of industrial development on American life. Some have been good: the increased ability to produce and the improved level of living for all; the endless demand for better-trained workers which should result in better-prepared citizens; and improved health and sanitation. Others have been bad: the ruthless exploitation of natural resources and, sometimes, of human resources; the frequent bitter strife among industrial groups and between capital and labor; the never ending struggle

6. Adolf A. Berle and Gardiner C. Means, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*, p. 19. New York: Macmillan Co., 1934.



for power. Most developments have had mixed values—partly good and partly bad.

The net effect has been to place increased responsibility on citizens for attempting to understand the forces that are operating and for exercising wise judgment in helping to resolve issues which might otherwise undermine our democratic way of life.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Probably nothing in American history has had greater influence in altering the lives of people than the changing methods of transportation and communication.

With the expanding frontier came the trek of new home-seekers on foot, by boat, sometimes with oxen or other team-drawn wagons. Later came railroads and rail transportation. Whereas, in the early years of this century, most people did not own or use an automobile, there were 15,436,000 privately owned motor vehicles in use in the United States by 1924 and more than 48,000,000 by 1950. The rapid increase in transportation by air may prove to be even more significant. In 1930, the number of passengers on airlines was 0.7 of 1 per cent of those on Pullmans; by 1950, it was more than 70 per cent.<sup>7</sup>

In the field of communication, the growth in printed materials has been phenomenal. To illustrate developments of other phases, a few facts may be of interest.

In 1930, there were 20,202,000 telephones in the United States; in 1950, there were 43,004,000. Most of this increase occurred during the 1940-50 decade.

Radio has had almost its entire growth during the past three decades. On January 1, 1922, there were in the United States only 30 broadcasting stations. During the period from 1942 to 1950, 2,092 new broadcasting stations were established. This record substantially more than doubled the total number preceding 1942.<sup>8</sup> In 1922, there were only 400,000 privately owned radio sets in use in the nation; by 1950, it is estimated there were 90,000,000 sets.<sup>9</sup> The nearly universal acceptance of the radio as an essential part of a household

7. *The Economic Almanac*, 1951-52, p. 390.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 356.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 359.

may be noted by the fact that 88.6 per cent of all rural farm families and 95.5 per cent of urban families have sets.<sup>10</sup>

Television has now become one of the important mass media. The number of "television-set productions" following World War II is significant. In 1946, 7,000 sets were produced; in 1950, the number was 7,464,000.<sup>11</sup>

These are but a few of the important developments in transportation and communication that have operated in recent years to alter man's relation to the rest of the world. Each of these has increased everyone's dependence upon others for new knowledge. Each medium has added new problems to those already needing solution. While these technological innovations have increased our means of acquiring knowledge of people from both near and distant places, they have also brought these people's problems, as well as their points of view, closer to us.

Communication may be used to resolve differences and to facilitate common understandings or to antagonize and divide hopelessly. It may be used to free the minds of men or to control them. What will happen to our civilization during coming years will be determined, not by how much communication we have or the technological improvements that are made, but, in large measure, by whether we use these facilities to exploit mankind or to improve our understandings and human relations.

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

This is an era characterized by extensive investigation on the part of technically trained people who devote their abilities and energies to pure and applied science. Utilization of the "scientific method" of investigation is a modern innovation. The change in attitude by the masses toward the frontier thinker and toward investigation and exploration for new truth in the physical sciences came slowly, but the change has been made, and currently the scientist is held in high esteem and generally regarded as a benefactor to mankind. Probably no class of people, excepting governmental leaders, and perhaps eventually social scientists, is in a comparable position to influence the fate of the world.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 363.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 358.

## SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGES

There is considerable concern about our failure to make as much progress in the social sciences and human relations as in the physical sciences and technology. Will Durant concluded some years ago that "the disorder of our souls is due to the rapidity of our development."<sup>17</sup>

From a nation of vast resources and limited wealth in Colonial days, we have become a nation with vast wealth and diminishing natural resources. From a people with limited education, except among the leaders, we have become a nation most of whose citizens have high-school training and many of whom are college graduates. From a country with few printed materials of any sort, we have become a people with so many books, magazines, newspapers, radio and television programs, pictures, and other cultural materials that no one can keep in touch with more than a fraction of the developments.

Man no longer needs to devote all of his time to the matter of providing a living for himself and his family. Hours of work have been shortened from sixty or more per week to not more than forty in many occupations. The customary work week for millions consists of five days. In general, neither youth nor the aged are needed or used by industry. However, the rate of production and of compensation have been greatly increased, with the result that living standards for most of the population are higher than could have been envisioned a generation ago.

It has often been said that wealth is a prelude to leisure and that leisure is necessary for culture. Perhaps that is the way things should work out, but culture, in a fundamental sense, seems often to follow haltingly and sometimes not at all. We have the leisure to develop the most enlightened of all societies. We have the mechanisms to build or to destroy a civilization. How will we use them?

Our major problem seems to be one of basic understandings and values. What shall we do with our machines? With our skills? Will we use them to harm or destroy our neighbors and eventually

17. Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy*, p. 577. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1917.

ourselves—or to build a better and more enlightened civilization?

Our growth, our mechanical and scientific progress, have brought us face to face with such issues as: How do we retain the abiding values of family life with our "new freedoms" for young and old? How do we properly balance the welfare of the individual against the welfare of society? How do we live peacefully in a world with many conflicting national interests? How do we use science for the benefit of mankind? If we are to resolve basic issues such as these, we must have many more people equipped with the necessary knowledge and the ability to weigh evidence and to generalize without being swayed by personal interests and prejudices. We must have more people who can weigh and judge values in terms of human needs and welfare rather than in terms of material considerations alone.

#### CHANGES IN THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

As indicated throughout this chapter, change and the effects of change are interwoven. Our government has changed as the total complexity of the nation and as the needs of the people have changed. National and international problems resulting from two world wars have greatly increased the functions of the federal government and have modified the responsibilities of state and local governments.

At the beginning of the first World War, the costs of state and local government were about seven-tenths of the total government bill. Tremendous changes in government came with the 1930-40 depression decade until "in the fiscal year 1941, the last year of peace, approximately three-fifths of all government spending was federal. . . . In 1947 [following the war], federal expenditures were 75 per cent; state, 11.2; and local, 13.8"<sup>18</sup>

A large proportion of the present cost of the federal government is the result of the new role this country has taken in international relations and of its defense program.

Among the most important changes during recent years has been the extended participation of this nation in the United Nations and in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Such co-operative agree-

18. M. Slade Kendrick, *Public Finance*, p. 31. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1951.

ments result in changed conditions which bring new international responsibilities and new problems for government. These changes require insights and points of view which often develop slowly. Trygve Lie has said, "Few constitutional documents in the history of the world have had greater significance for the human race than the United Nations Charter."<sup>19</sup>

At the present time, the American people, and to a greater or lesser extent the people of other nations, are facing a series of dilemmas relating to the role of government in human affairs. They recognize the need for government but have not learned what safeguards must be established to assure that government will serve the people instead of regimenting them to serve the ends of those in control.

It is obvious, therefore, that the question as to what is the role of national and of international government is still to be resolved and that its resolution will require better insights and understandings than now generally exist.

### *Implications of Social Change for Education*

The public schools constitute a fundamental and an integral aspect of American life. They are organized and controlled by the people of the respective states and local communities. In general, these people genuinely believe in and strongly support their public schools. But they expect much of education—perhaps at times even more than is reasonable. This expectation presents a challenge and a dilemma.

The people do not want the schools to control America's destiny but, rather, to assure a promising future for the nation and its citizens. However, the program of the schools tends to lag behind the changes in society. As previously indicated, so many important changes occur so frequently that their implications for education may not be realized or understood. Moreover, changes—even desirable changes—are likely to disturb people and to make them restive. Changes in the schools, which are so intimately related to the welfare of their children, may be even more disturbing than many others.

It is inherent in the American plan for education that lay citizens should not want to leave the responsibility for adjusting and im-

<sup>19</sup> Trygve Lie, "The Charter," in *Peace on Earth*, p. 7. New York: Hermitage House, Inc., 1949.

proving the public schools entirely to educators. Although they may be complacent or inarticulate at times, many citizens would like to help plan the adjustments in the schools. In our society, their help is needed.

#### THE IMPACT ON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

American education has, in general, represented an organized effort to meet what have been assumed to be the needs of the people. As change has occurred, new needs have emerged. It is not possible or desirable in this brief treatment either to trace the great changes that have already taken place in the public school program or to assess all of the implications of change in American life for the public schools. Instead, attention will be centered on a few of the more significant implications.

Since even more important changes are likely to occur in the future than have already taken place, it is obvious that the schools should make a forthright effort to prepare young people to cope intelligently with new situations and to work out satisfactory solutions. Although considerable progress has been made, we do not yet know how this purpose can best be accomplished. Basic to further progress will be better-trained teachers, more competent educational leadership, greater emphasis on the scientific approach to problems and on the ability to judge in terms of fundamental values to society, and the development of an understanding on the part of people which will assure their intelligent co-operation.

Because of the increasingly complex economy in which we live and the many factors and forces which are operating in the world today, it seems apparent that a better economic understanding is necessary if serious difficulties are to be avoided. There are all sorts of ideas to be encountered under present conditions. If we are to build an economy of security and plenty with equity and justice for all, how can we best proceed? Undoubtedly more emphasis will be needed on the development of historical perspectives, on an understanding of technological foundations and interrelationships, and on the education of the consumer.

If our democracy is to function satisfactorily and if we are to live in peace and harmony with other nations in a rapidly shrinking social world, it is obvious that we need a better understanding

of human beings and of the organizations and institutions they have developed. The foundations for this understanding must be laid in the home and in the primary grades. In addition, provision must be made for better teaching and understanding of social problems, history and geography, languages, sociology and psychology, and community, national, and international relations.

In the final analysis, what happens to a person, a community, a state, or a nation will depend, in large measure, on the moral concepts and value systems that prevail. No matter how much science a person knows or what technical skills are found among a people, there can be little assurance of a positive and constructive contribution to civilization if the moral qualities are unsound or the values are distorted. To teach mathematics or to develop skills in a material sense is much easier than to help people learn how to become good citizens who act in terms of value: which are essential for a sound civilization.

No great civilization can be built on ruthless exploitation of human or natural resources. For continuing progress to be made, we must understand, develop, and utilize our resources more constructively than we do at present. This will require an educational program which provides the necessary information, insights, and understandings for all. Moreover, for human resources to be developed and utilized effectively in our complex technology, more emphasis than at present will need to be placed on occupational information, understanding, guidance, and training.

Provisions for the older adults are becoming more important as the ratio of this group to the total population increases.<sup>20</sup> The nation is destined to suffer a tremendous loss of human productivity and therewith to encounter serious social and economic problems, unless new educational programs are planned that will meet these needs.<sup>21</sup> The job ahead is to "bring about a general citizen acceptance of the actuality" of the creative ability of these people and to recognize the "value of its potential."<sup>22</sup> Moreover, with the

20. "Social Contributions by the Aging," *The Annals*, CCLXXIX (January, 1952).

21. J. Oscar Kaplan, "Psychological Aspects of Aging," *The Annals*, CCLXXIX (January, 1952), 32-42. The article contains a good review of a number of studies.

22. Howard Wheeler, "Creative Activities of Older People," *The Annals*, CCLXXIX (January, 1952), 92.

rapidity of change and the complexity of civilization, it becomes increasingly important that adults keep informed and have a sound basis for understanding developments in order to meet satisfactorily their responsibilities as citizens.

As we meet needs such as these, others will unquestionably arise, and other adjustments will have to be made. It seems apparent that if the people of this country are to be prepared to make satisfactory progress in solving their cultural, social, and economic problems, more and better education for all will be necessary.

A question of major importance is: How can the public schools best make the adjustments that will be required to meet the needs of our rapidly changing society? Educators alone cannot bring about these adjustments because the schools belong to and are controlled by the people. Lay citizens alone cannot do the job because proposals must be implemented by school personnel. Close co-operation between lay citizens and educators in planning improvements will, therefore, be necessary if the schools are to be in position to meet the needs.

#### CHANGING CONCEPTIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

It was not difficult for the people in the New England town meeting to solve the few problems of the schools of that time. Accompanying the complex growth of the nation were many and diverse demands upon the schools. The acceptance of the state's obligation for education came slowly. In time, constitutions provided for legislative action, and the state began a new role in education. Therewith came state boards of education, executive officers for state boards, state school staffs, and a large array of educational services.

As society and the schools have changed, frequent changes in the methods of organizing, administering, and financing education have been necessary. Such conditions have created many problems for lawmaking bodies and state and local administrative groups.

Modifications in the pattern of organization have somewhat paralleled other changes. Complete community control of our schools in the early inception of public education soon gave way to control by representative boards of education and "specialists" serving as



executive officers of these boards.<sup>23</sup> Many boards of education and superintendents were impressed with the efficiency of military organizations and with the management of "big business." Eager to seek efficiency and to admit that the operation of schools is big business, school boards and superintendents often copied military and business methods.

Simultaneously there was emerging a body of educational literature that regarded school people as "specialists." This literature fostered the idea that the schools could be effectively managed only by people specially trained and operating in the framework of "line authority" by which all directives were to come from the executive of the board of education. The result was obvious. Schools have existed in the community but often not as a part of it.

The complexity of the problems of present-day culture is such that a reversal of the trend of the past is taking place. Currently, educational leadership is looking toward increased co-operation on the part of lay people for assistance in the solution of these problems. The present-day school administrator, who is successful in a fundamental sense, cannot expect to be an "authority" by virtue of his position. He can no longer expect to determine what the schools are to do and to direct his staff to see that it is done. Instead, the school administrator of today should be recognized as the leader in community affairs, not because of his position but because of his ability to facilitate community co-operation and to lead in planning an educational program that will meet community needs.

### *Co-operation, an Important Characteristic of American Life*

Although committed to a competitive economy, the American people have marshaled their united strength in times of crises, such as war, and have at many other times displayed a special aptitude for co-operation. The development of the military and industrial power of the nation during the last war is one of the impressive feats of history. This was accomplished only as a result of strikingly effective co-operation between government, military groups, management of industry, and labor.

23. Theodore L. Reller, "The Historical Development of School Administration," chap. i, in *Educational Progress and School Administration*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1936.

The strength of this union of effort is directly related to the worthiness of the "cause" which cements the people together in a "freedom-of-choice" nation. However, there are numerous instances wherein segments of the population and a majority of the people in many communities have chosen to co-operate for a common purpose.

Community life in America comprises many groups. Each of these groups is sustained by the common interest of its members. Most persons in the community may be affiliated with one of these groups, but many "belong" to several groups and therewith have experiences in sharing and exchanging opinion on a voluntary basis. Organizations that may appear to be widely separated in their objectives likewise may co-operate as organized groups with benefit to all. Co-operative efforts by organizations representing industry, management, and labor have shown many encouraging results.

Labor and management are attempting to establish better channels of communication that will help workers to understand the economic aspects of industry and help officials of industry to learn more about the problems of labor. The National Association of Manufacturers has exerted special effort to aid local organizations in establishing "co-operative" and "two-way communication" programs involving the Association's membership and has devised programs that tend to improve the quality of co-operation among the participating groups.

Several factors have contributed to the phenomenal development of American industry during recent years. Not the least of these is the increasing trend of "democratic operation" wherein management and employees work toward a commonly approved goal. The willingness to exploit men, women, and children for the purpose of increasing productivity is becoming a thing of the past. The needs and aspirations of employees are increasingly regarded as of paramount importance by management. The "competitive" pattern of economy common to this nation is more and more coming to regard human welfare as of major concern.

Production records indicate that it pays dividends to invite employees to be a part of management. Sick-leave benefits and unemployment and other insurance advantages are found by industry to enhance profits. Ordway Tead's comment on this trend toward

increasing co-operation in industry is a pertinent one with respect to the educational implications of this movement:

The test of worth is whether they are helping workers as individuals and groups to have educational experiences which through their own voluntary and responsible participation in handling diverse affairs become occasions of learning and growth in individual self-respect and civic competence. The benefits fundamentally desired are those of *enriched and growing personalities*.<sup>24</sup>

Business and industrial groups sponsor co-operative programs with apparent good results and frequently extend their efforts to co-operate with other community groups, including those in education. Occasionally the motives have been shortsighted and selfish, but increasingly there has been a general interest in developing a more satisfactory educational program through the public schools.

Professional people have recognized a need for co-operation with other interrelated groups. As the professions have grown, they have tended to become more technical and more highly specialized. Each has devised its own "language" and achievement techniques but has found handicaps because of the gulf that separates it from other groups of specialists. A reversal of this procedure currently exists on the part of some groups where an attempt is being made to find common ground and common terminology for working with others.

During recent years there has been much co-operative effort in research throughout the nation. Perhaps most spectacular is the research sponsored by the federal government that pertains particularly to the war-preparedness program.<sup>25</sup>

All of the technological aspects of war have been developed as a result of co-operative research. The progress made in medicine during the last dozen years is another striking example of teams co-operating in research. Moreover, these researchers co-operate with the practitioner in medicine.

Co-operative research, too, is responsible for much of the progress in the industrial world. Industry sponsors about the same number of

24. Ordway Tead, *The Art of Administration*, p. 37. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1951.

25. *Scientific Monthly*, September, 1950, is devoted entirely to the progress made by science ("The Age of Science, 1900-1950") during the last fifty years and clearly shows the interdependence of scientific researchers.

researchers as the government and universities combined.<sup>26</sup> Referring to the dependence of one specialist upon another in technological pursuits, one industrialist has recently said, "To build a modern chemical plant, for example, requires the services of more than one hundred *kinds* of engineers. To operate it requires an even more bewildering array of special talents."<sup>27</sup>

It is a significant fact that all areas of scientific investigation appear to have this characteristic of interdependence as a condition of progress. It seems quite clear that most Americans have been learning to live and work and express themselves in groups and have come to recognize the values of such co-operative action.

### *Need for Citizen Co-operation in Education*

The increasing complexity of today's world, the uncertainty of the future, and the resultant demand for increased services of the schools impel those who are legally responsible for directing education to seek an enlarged social setting for the solution of the issues with which they are confronted. Actually, there seems to be no choice. Either more people will be allied with the public schools, giving information and help, or the schools are destined to be restricted in their services toward improving community, state, and national life.

The generally nonpartisan administration of public education, the fact that the schools belong to all of the people, their freedom from competition with any other similar agency—all tend to create an attitude of indifference on the part of citizens.

In certain instances, it is likely that the very need that requires improved co-operation may generate problems which handicap the process. For example, in centers with rapid population increases, education problems tend to multiply. However, newcomers in the community may hesitate to participate in plans affecting the school program, or the older residents may be reluctant to have their new neighbors take part in community activities of this kind. Special steps will need to be taken to overcome such difficulties.

26. M. H. Trytten, "Scientists," *Scientific American*, CLXXXV (September, 1951), 73.

27. Crawford H. Greenewalt, President, E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., before Annual Meeting of National Security Industrial Association, New York City, October 1, 1952.

In practically every community, there are some individuals and some groups anxious to ally their "interests" with education. Unfortunately some of these may have selfish motives. Vested interests or pressure groups of many kinds sometimes look toward the schools as a means of attaining the ends they seek because the schools so deeply penetrate the homes of almost all the people. However, there are many others who are genuinely concerned about education and are eager to help in every way possible.

The educational job of the near future, with inflated dollars, inadequate school plants, and a tremendous increase in school population, is such that more people must help evaluate and improve the school programs if adequate support is to be assured. Schools exist for every community and the people regard them as an important part of the American way of life.

The public schools began by common consent; they have developed to their present status by virtue of a willingness of the people to contribute both moral and financial support to the realization of their aims. State legislative bodies, acting as representatives of the people, modify the legal status of the schools at the will of the voters. Local boards of education provide the policies that govern the schools. Daily, the nearly thirty million children who go from home to school and from school to home represent the largest number of people that can be found in any co-operative enterprise within the country. In fact, the public schools cannot exist without the continuing co-operation and support of the public.

Most people believe that the hope of democracy depends upon the universal support given the public schools and upon the support these schools give to the people. People in democratic countries must continuously look to education as a social instrument to serve the will and wishes of the people. Science and technology, important as they are, are not the only products of education. The survival of democracy depends upon the way education as a social instrument may be used.

The pattern of local community organization of education makes the school available and adaptable to all the people. The purpose of education is to improve democratic citizenship by using the school as one of the primary agencies of such citizenship. This goal can well be attained because of the unique characteristics of

the American schools. Education thus may be used both to evaluate democracy at any given time and to point the way democracy should move. As Newton Edwards has said:

Education should be neither a hostage to the past nor an instrument restrained within the confines of the present; it also has its obligations to the future. In any dynamic civilization, education has an important role to play in the process of social transition.<sup>28</sup>

Neither educators nor lay citizens can foresee clearly all the problems the future will bring. However, it is certain that public school education must be changed—and improved—as change occurs in our society. It seems evident that the best way to assure that the schools may contribute to community improvement is through a program of continuous and constructive citizen co-operation for better schools.

28. Newton Edwards, "Education as a Social Instrument," *School Review*, LIX (October, 1951), 396.

## CHAPTER III

### *We Have Been Learning How To Co-operate*

THEODORE L. BELLER

#### *A Century of Experience in Co-operation*

Citizen participation in state and local efforts to promote progress in education is as old as the system of public education in this country. It was found in some measure in the steps which led to the establishment of that system and has continued throughout the growth of educational service in our society. Co-operation has, of course, varied widely in its meanings and applications and in its quality and vigor. In some instances it would be difficult to determine what was a result of public interest and what was professional action or the point at which co-operative procedures were consciously introduced.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, when tremendous effort was devoted to the promotion of free public schools, a major portion of this effort and action was borne by laymen. This was at least in part the result of the fact that the professional group had scarcely come into being as a consciously existing group. Mann and Barnard, for example, were in a genuine sense laymen, not having been drawn from the profession of education. Their early work in public education was performed in state legislatures and was clearly the work of laymen. However, the vigorous manner in which they continued to promote the advancement of public education and the years of service which they devoted to it place them high in the ranks of professional educators.

Co-operation, in the currently accepted meaning, has been attained rather late in many of the areas of action treated here. The establishment of a system of public education in America, which occurred in the early part of the nineteenth century, was the result of "co-operative action" (though not consciously seen as such) on

the part of many individuals and groups of "different habits, notions, philosophies, prejudices, and religious persuasions."<sup>1</sup> Educational advancements since that time have similarly resulted from the contributions of varied groups.

Major attention, in this chapter, is given to some of the significant experiences of our society over the years in developing a system of public education. The specific instances described represent only selected phases of co-operation for the improvement of the schools. At any period, numerous other examples of co-operation could be cited. Many other organizations have co-operated with the schools and school personnel and could properly have been treated here. Among them are service clubs, veterans' organizations, farm groups, chambers of commerce, women's organizations such as the American Association of University Women and women's clubs, the press, and improvement associations. Pages would be needed to list the organizations in any one city which have education committees or which have at one time or another worked together with other citizens to establish better schools.

The following illustrations have been chosen with a view to indicating the variety of co-operative endeavors carried on by citizens of the community or the state, supplying some evidence regarding the span of years during which such co-operation has been developing, describing the media through which co-operative activities have functioned, and presenting an overview of the manner in which "we have been learning how to co-operate."

### *Co-operation of School Trustees and Educators*

In New England, education was first administered through the town meeting. When town meetings found it difficult or impossible to exercise general supervision of schools or to take effective action in regard to specific matters such as selection of teachers or appraisal of results, provision was made for school committees (trustees). In the period when many educational problems were directly discussed and acted upon by the town meeting, the teachers met with other citizens of the community to discuss the problems of the school.

1. Newton Edwards and Herman G. Richey, *The School in the American Social Order*, p. 338. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1947.



## CO-OPERATION INVOLVING EARLY BOARDS OF EDUCATION

As the problems which were involved in providing educational services became more complex, education committees or boards of education came to be organized generally. As the size of the community increased, there was a marked tendency to increase the number of members of such boards and to assign to different members special responsibilities for particular phases of the educational program. In some large cities, boards of education numbered four or five hundred members. These members represented the various geographic subdivisions of the city. They continued, in many instances, to have some direct responsibility for administering schools in their respective areas and at the same time served as members of the large body which determined general educational policies for the city as a whole. Large boards kept many persons informed about and participating in educational matters. On the other hand, they proved to be unwieldy, encouraged board members to represent the needs of sections rather than the whole community, and resulted in direct administration by board members.

Many continuing and temporary committees were created by early boards of education to study educational problems and to exercise administrative responsibility for adopted procedures. The board of education of Chicago, for example, had more than seventy committees in the later part of the nineteenth century. There was a committee on each school subject which was being taught and for each one being considered as a possible new subject. Other committees dealt with problems pertaining to supplies, equipment, housing, attendance, tardiness, financial problems, and teachers.

When the difficulties inherent in standing committees began to show up, and when the responsibility for the conduct of schools became so burdensome that it was no longer possible for boards of education to exercise administrative responsibilities, a breakdown of the system threatened. Then slowly there emerged a movement to provide for the employment of *men to serve as administrative officers*. In many instances, however, board members were reluctant to surrender their prerogatives. Thus, in the city of Washington, the first superintendent of schools in his early years of service spent much of his time visiting the classrooms of the city. At the same time some members of the board of education devoted an equal

amount of time to visitation and reported even a greater number of visits made. The annual report of this city for 1875-76, for example, states that one member of the board of trustees had visited 2,340 classrooms, while the superintendent made 1,232 visits.<sup>2</sup>

#### ADMINISTRATORS, BOARD MEMBERS, AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

As the men who entered the field of educational administration became better prepared, boards of education gradually delegated the leadership and administrative responsibilities to the superintendent of schools and other administrative officers. After many years of trial and error, boards gradually came to see their responsibilities as those of establishing basic policy and of appraising the work of the schools.

Difficult tasks confronted school administrators and board of education members during the last half of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth. In this period the holding power of the schools increased greatly, the curriculum expanded rapidly, the high school moved toward its modern form, kindergartens appeared, attendance at school became general, new concepts of adequate education were promulgated, and adequate facilities emerged. Yet, despite the enormity of the problems, school administration advanced notably beyond the inefficiency and the petty political manipulation and patronage which had commonly existed under unwieldy board of education organizations.

This improvement of administrative practice, effected at the very time when major advances in educational services were being achieved, was the result of co-operation between boards of education and school administrators. The occasional, publicized conflicts between the board of education and the administration suggest how important it is that there be co-operation. When the number of administrative units is considered and the changes which have been effected in public education are noted, it becomes evident that, with some notable exceptions, there has been excellent co-operation. The unique character of the local control arrangements in the United States and the extent to which they require co-operation have been too little recognized.

2. Theodore L. Reller, *The Development of the City Superintendency of Schools in the United States*, p. 198. Philadelphia: The Author, 1935.

### *Co-operation of Legislators and Other Public Officials with Educators*

Many men in public life were giving serious thought to the problem of providing for adequate public education even before educators were recognized as a professional group. Many leaders in early American society, such as Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Rush, Robert Coram, Noah Webster, and DuPont de Nemours, published essays setting forth in some detail their conceptions of the manner in which a system of public education should be developed.

In the early 1830's governors of many states, in their messages to the legislatures, urged consideration of the need for common school education. In their view, education was to be regarded as a challenging social problem, one which would have a large part in determining the future of the nation. Yet, when legislatures took action providing for the development of the public school enterprise, they were not always supported by those who were engaged in teaching. Horace Mann, for example, encountered the most vigorous opposition from Boston teachers to his plans for the advancement of public education in *Massachusetts*. The teachers regarded the plans as an attack upon them and their work. While this type of conflict between educators and members of the legislatures was not common, it is perhaps true that the development in public education in the first half of the last century was largely inspired by laymen rather than by those in the profession.

In the more than a century which has passed since the vitalization of public education in the early nineteenth century, legislators and educators have made progress in learning to work together. In recent years, some legislators have felt that teachers' associations have played too large a role in legislation pertaining to education. On the other hand, it may be argued that some citizen groups have not taken enough interest in such legislation. Despite these occasional conflicts, it is fair to say that, by and large, there has been relatively close and constructive co-operation between leaders in education and members of state legislatures.

Legislative interim committees on education have been rather widely employed in some states in recent years. In some instances, they have aided citizen co-operation in the field of education; in other situations they have been a serious threat to it.

In many states, at almost any period within the last century, certain members of legislatures can be pointed out as men who have devoted tremendous energy both to the study of educational problems and to the promotion of appropriate educational legislation. From time to time one or two such leaders in state affairs have come to know the needs and problems of education almost as well as the most outstanding educators themselves and have been able to see these problems in relation to the many others which confront the state. To such men must go much of the credit for the development of public education in our society.

### *Co-operation of Voluntary Public Education Associations*

Prior to the establishment of systems of public education there were associations supporting pauper or charity schools in many of our cities. When the undesirable features of these arrangements became increasingly apparent, reforms were frequently promoted by associations which were set up to achieve free public education. Such organizations as the Pennsylvania Society for the Promotion of Public Schools and the American Institute of Instruction did much to spread the free school idea and to secure needed educational reforms. In addition to the many associations found in the various cities and states, the lyceum movement made a significant contribution to public education.

The American Lyceum, the most widely known of these organizations, was established in 1829. It was organized "for the improvement of its members in useful knowledge, and the advancement of popular education, by introducing uniformity and improvements in common schools, by becoming auxiliary to a board of education."<sup>3</sup> Very rapidly after the establishment of the lyceum, branches were formed in nearly every state. Within six years it was reported that there were more than nine hundred such institutions in the nation. Although many of these groups were small, a membership of two or three hundred was not uncommon. During the first decade of their existence, the lyceums devoted a large amount of energy to the advancement of public education.

Voluntary public education associations probably reached their peak in the period when this young nation was struggling to de-

3. Edwards and Richey, *op. cit.*, p. 335.

termine the basic educational policies through which it hoped to prepare youth to function effectively as adult citizens. However, throughout our history they have risen and declined, depending upon the status of public education and the leadership which appeared among public spirited citizens. In some instances, such an association operated on a state-wide basis, as did the Public Education Association of Pennsylvania, which for more than half a century nurtured public education in that state and sponsored legislation for the protection of children and youth.

#### THE PUBLIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK

Among voluntary associations in recent years the Public Education Association of New York has been outstanding. This association, established in 1895, grew out of a good government club organized to battle official corruption that seemed to be found in every facet of the city's life.

The charter of the Public Education Association of New York was granted in 1899. The general objectives of the association are to study the problems of public education, to investigate the conditions of the common and corporate schools, to stimulate public interest in the schools, and to propose from time to time such change in their organization, management, or educational methods as may seem desirable or necessary.<sup>4</sup>

The progress of public education in New York City during the last fifty years is inextricably bound up with the history of the Public Education Association. This association organized the first school-parent group in the city, out of which grew the United Parents' Association, with a present membership of approximately two hundred thousand. It introduced social work into the schools through the visiting-teacher program—a program later adopted by other school systems in the country. It sponsored the first recreation program in the city schools and the first school lunch program for undernourished children. For fifteen years it sponsored classes in the public schools designed to demonstrate modern methods of education. It sponsored the all-day neighborhood school experiment. All of these projects or outgrowths of them were eventually

4. Information supplied by Executive Secretary of the Association in letter of March 24, 1952.

schools. The members view the Commission as a modern lyceum, promoting greater recognition of the importance of public education.

The Commission is national, not in the sense of seeking national solutions to the problems confronting public education, but rather in its belief that the need for increased interest in education is nation-wide and in its confidence that the Commission can stimulate individuals, communities, and states throughout the nation to place greater emphasis on the study of educational problems. As a result of its efforts, citizens committees have been organized in many communities. The Commission has urged committees to work *with* superintendents of schools and other educational authorities. It considers co-operation on the part of all citizens imperative if sound solutions to difficult problems are to be found.

### *Citizen Co-operation in the Study of School Policies*

The beginning of modern methods of appraisal of school systems is found in various reports on education in European countries during the first half of the nineteenth century. While these reports cannot be classed as surveys in the modern sense, they made a contribution in this country by stimulating the study of appraisal problems. Cousin's report to the French government on public education in Prussia and other German states was published in 1832 and translated into English in 1834. It was a rather complete account of European school systems and became available at the time when Americans were struggling to organize state school systems and to effect improvements in their schools. Until this time, while education was regarded as legally a responsibility of the state, the states had done little more than pass a few laws. Some communities had taken important steps, and some private groups had provided educational programs, but the idea of state action in the field was not accepted.

As a result of Cousin's report, Stowe was commissioned by the legislature of Ohio in 1836 to make a study of European school systems.<sup>5</sup> He submitted his report in 1837. Shortly after this, Bache

5. Edwards and Richey, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

was sent by the trustees of Girard College to Europe on a similar project. Barnard followed, as did Mann and a number of other outstanding educators of the period. These studies of foreign school systems tended to highlight the inadequacies of the systems of education in the American states.

In the half-century which followed there was little that might be called an organized survey or study of schools. However, the reports of boards of education and of city superintendents of schools increasingly described in detail the conditions they found in their own cities and included reports of their visits to other cities. It was rather common practice in the 1870's and 1880's for members of city boards of education to accompany the superintendent on his visits to other school systems when a particular problem confronted them. Although many appraisals were made, their results were not always recorded in useful form.

Especially in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first decade or two of the twentieth century, the annual reports of some of the outstanding city superintendents of schools were excellent analyses of educational conditions, problems, and issues. Many of these annual reports are remarkable in the objectivity they show on the part of the administration in analyzing the conditions in their school systems. They are equally impressive in the excellence of the recommendations made. In some instances, they proved highly disturbing to members of boards of education who were perpetuating inefficient practices of an earlier day.

#### THE SCHOOL SURVEY MOVEMENT

*Types of School Surveys.* The modern school survey movement began shortly after 1900. In the period from 1910 to 1918, a number of surveys were carried on by such educational leaders as Cubberley, Bobbitt, Moore, Judd, Elliott, and Strayer. The surveys conducted in this period and a discussion of procedures for conducting surveys were treated in Part II of the Thirteenth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. In the discussion of questions pertaining to how and by whom a survey can best be made, this yearbook makes the following pronouncements:

Knowledge to the saturation point can come only by actual participation in the work [p. 20].

The self-survey under competent outside expert direction gradually forces itself upon one as opposed to the survey by outside experts because of the smaller financial cost, because of the avoidance of internal community eruptions stimulated by radical conclusions deduced from statistics unsympathetically gathered and interpreted, because, further, of the wholesome educational and stimulating effect of such a self-examination upon the whole teaching and supervisory corps of a school system, and because, finally, such a work is the logical job of those already employed to determine and carry out the policies of the school system [pp. 21-22].<sup>6</sup>

The comparison made in the Thirteenth Yearbook between the self-survey and the survey done by the outside expert is significant. The report tends to favor the self-survey with outside expert assistance used only as needed. The self-survey is contrasted with the outside survey largely in terms of participation by professionals within the system and without. No consideration appears to have been given at that time to the problem of citizen co-operation in planning and carrying through the survey. When the advantages of participation are discussed, it is with the idea that members of the administrative staff should participate rather than that other citizens should be fundamentally involved. Also, relatively little is said about the contribution of members of the teaching staff.

Despite these limitations, this analysis of the self-survey and of the desirability of participation could very well be accepted today, provided a broader concept of the self-survey is kept in mind. It would emphasize considerably more participation by parents and other citizens and by school personnel. The arguments so cogently advanced for self-study on the part of educators could be applied with equal force to the citizens of a community. How, except through "actual participation in the work," can they achieve the essential "saturation" which, according to the yearbook, "will result in desirable and continued development of the educational system"?

6. *Plans for Organizing School Surveys with a Summary of Typical School Surveys*, pp. 18-22. Thirteenth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1914.



sional staff of the schools and other citizens of the community to participate in considerably larger numbers and in more fundamental ways than in the older types of survey.

Despite the best publicity methods, the outside-expert type of survey has usually failed to utilize the energy of many of the local people in a productive manner. In recent surveys, however, much thought has been given to finding ways through which citizens and staff members could participate in the identification and clarification of the problems and issues to be studied, in the preparation of forms to be used to collect data, in the procedures to be employed in the actual collection and analysis of data, and in the formulation of the conclusions and recommendations growing out of the study. Pasadena, California, and Garden City, New York, afford interesting examples of such studies in local school systems. On the state level, Florida and Missouri provide notable illustrations. In these studies the conclusions and recommendations were largely arrived at by representative citizens groups taking part in the survey.

### *Co-operation in Vocational and Adult Education*

Any historical sketch of citizen co-operation for better schools should especially cite vocational and adult education as areas in which we have had valuable experiences meriting wider application. In the vocational-education movement of the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth, representatives of different social and economic groups played a very important role. This can be readily understood since industrialists in this period were quite concerned about the possible loss to industry of many youth who dropped out of school and of others who completed certain nonvocational programs.

#### THE MODERN VOCATIONAL-EDUCATION MOVEMENT

The period around 1905-6 is frequently indicated as the beginning of the modern vocational-education movement. While there had been commissions studying the problem previously, these years seem to mark a period when there was especially widespread interest and when a number of rather different activities were undertaken. For example, during this period a commission was appointed by Governor Douglas of Massachusetts to consider new educational efforts

to prepare people for responsibility in industry through the study of education of a similar type provided by other states, by the United States government, and by foreign countries.<sup>8</sup>

As a result of this investigation, the Massachusetts legislature in 1906 authorized provisions for industrial education as a part of the education program of the state. In the same year, the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education was established. The first meeting of this association was attended by many nationally known industrialists as well as by educators. This society played an important part in securing the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act. It later changed its name to the National Society for Vocational Education.

In 1908 the president of the American Federation of Labor appointed a committee to investigate the methods of industrial education in this country and abroad and to submit findings, conclusions, and recommendations at the next annual meeting. The committee studied the apprenticeship system, the co-operative industrial-education plan, and educational plans of private companies and private schools. It recommended a unification of the efforts of all groups in order to achieve a more adequate program of industrial education. Finally, it drafted a bill which was introduced in the United States Senate in 1910. This bill was the direct forerunner of the Smith-Hughes Act.

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEES IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Rather early in the history of vocational education the values of vocational advisory committees were recognized. These committees were favored as ways of developing programs based on the real needs of the community and as an important way of establishing desirable communication between the schools and the people. The establishment of these committees grew from an awareness of the fact that labor unions and manufacturers might become either formidable opponents or important allies in carrying forward the educational program. Since both of these groups, as well as the schools, are interested in the competence of workers, the advisory committee

8. Melvin Lewis Barlow, "A History of Trade and Industrial Education in California," pp. 20-77. Unpublished Doctor's dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1949.

appeared to be a valuable aid in carrying forward a program co-operatively. These committees have also served an important purpose in helping to keep the training program in line with current practice in industry.

Recognition of the value of advisory committees in vocational education is also exemplified in school legislation. For example, the Indiana vocational-education law of 1913 authorized trustees and boards of education to appoint advisory committees for vocational programs. The law made it the duty of the advisory committee "to counsel with and advise the board and other school officials having the management and supervision of such schools or departments."<sup>9</sup> The significance of such procedures has also been recognized in federal laws pertaining to vocational education.

The Vocational Division of the United States Office of Education has long encouraged the use of advisory committees, especially in the field of industrial education, at the local level. Thus, advisory committees, which in a sense recognize special interest groups, have been widely employed. While only a few states require such committees, well over half now recommend their appointment. They have come to be generally regarded as essential parts of vocational-education programs. On the basis of this experience, it has been easier to understand how other citizens advisory committees might serve a somewhat similar purpose in relation to other aspects of public education.

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR CO-OPERATION IN ADULT EDUCATION

The field of adult education has provided still different types of experiences in citizen co-operation. It should be emphasized that adult education is much broader than the adult-education program commonly found in public school systems. Some agency, perhaps the public school system, should, therefore, take responsibility for identifying and co-ordinating the various adult-education activities in a community. While the public schools have taken leadership in this matter, they have frequently felt the need for an advisory council representing the various interested individuals and groups. For

9. American Vocational Association, Inc., Committee on Research and Publications, *Vocational Advisory Committees*, p. 4. Washington: The Association, 1950.

this reason, a considerable number of communities have developed an adult-education council. These councils have served, as have also the public school adult-education programs themselves, as instruments for citizen co-operation.

There has also been more of a tendency in the field of adult education than in most other areas for students to participate in the evaluation of the program and in the determination of the course offerings. Furthermore, because of the variety of the offerings, it has been possible in many instances for citizens with a particular talent and background of experience to participate in the instructional activities. Thus, the adult-education program, both through its administrative organization and through its actual operation, has been a valuable laboratory for citizen participation in school affairs.

The experiences in the field of vocational and adult education should not be regarded as unique. Similar developments can be found in the fine arts in some school systems and in such areas as health and physical education. However, vocational and adult education do represent the most widely found examples of this particular type of co-operation and, therefore, are offered here as a part of the background in light of which plans for more effective co-operative programs can be developed.

### *Parent-Teacher Co-operation*

*Parent co-operation for better schools is of a somewhat different type from that found in the other areas considered. Co-operative practices of educators in their dealings with the board of education, legislatures, and voluntary education associations are designed to facilitate the development of an improved educational service. This is also a major purpose of the parent-teacher association, but of equal importance is parent-teacher co-operation in the education of individual children. Here we are confronted with the fact that the responsibilities of the home and the school in connection with the education of children and youth are so closely related that the role of each can be most effectively discharged if they work together. In this case the improvement of the home through parent education may be more important than the improvement of the school.*

Informal parent-teacher co-operation of some type has probably

existed since the establishment of schools. In the small school and rural community of our nation a century ago there was little need for a formal arrangement to facilitate this co-operation. The teacher was usually seen as a member of the community and not as one of many members of a professional group. In industrial cities, on the other hand, improved transportation, more stratification of the society, the professionalization of the teacher, and new educational services have created the need for a more formal organization to facilitate parent-teacher co-operation.

#### MOTHERS' CLUBS—AN EXPRESSION OF A NEED

This need for fuller parent-teacher co-operation apparently expressed itself in a number of cities at approximately the same time. At least a number of schools and school systems reported parent-teacher organizations in the last decade of the nineteenth century. They were actively encouraged by some school principals and superintendents. A somewhat typical experience is that of Detroit. There, a principal, Harriet Marsh, organized the Hancock (School) Mothers' Club in 1894. Principal Marsh described the first meeting as follows:

The principal of the Hancock School issued mimeographed copies of an invitation requesting parents to meet a certain Thursday afternoon in October, 1894, to consider the needs of the family in which all were so mutually interested, for at this time the district was much distraught by the religious and political questions of the day; . . . an immediate unification of all elements in the study of some central object was eminently necessary to the well-being of the school.<sup>10</sup>

Pierce reported that:

In addition to the benefits gained by the study and discussion of formal topics, Principal Marsh cited the clearing up of points involving discipline, such as tardiness, destruction of property, and cigarette smoking by older boys.

An outgrowth of the Hancock Mothers' Club was the organization of the Mothers' Congress of Michigan in Detroit, May 3-4, 1898.<sup>11</sup>

10. Paul R. Pierce, *The Origin and Development of the Public School Principalship*, p. 129. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 125-26.

THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF MOTHERS AND THE  
PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Interestingly, while local clubs of the type described above were appearing, another movement took form. The National Congress of Mothers was conceived by young women of prominence in Washington, D.C., who were stirred by the sufferings and injustices perpetrated upon little children through ignorance or neglect. They had known leaders in the chautauqua movement and in the kindergarten movement. Being residents of Capital City and aware of the attention given to the National Congress and its deliberations, they hit upon the idea of a national congress of mothers as a way of emphasizing "the supreme importance of the child."<sup>12</sup>

Mrs. Alice McLellan Birney enlisted the full co-operation of the wife of the President of the United States and the wives of the Cabinet members. She, with the assistance of others such as Mrs. Phoebe Hearst, wrote thousands of letters to prominent men and women seeking help in obtaining newspaper publicity for the idea and in securing in various localities the name of one "woman of position." Then in 1897 the Congress met. It was a tremendous success. More than two thousand appeared, although the organizers stated they would have been satisfied with fifty. Even a few fathers appeared, one of whom courageously objected to the "maternal monopoly" of the Congress. Discussions were held on heredity, nutrition, physical culture, and child development. G. Stanley Hall presented a summation of current research in child study. When the Congress adjourned it had become a fact and a force. The *New York Times* hailed the Congress with conspicuous headlines and suggested that it should extend downward into neighborhood congresses of mothers throughout the nation.

During the next few years, the Congress identified most of the areas to which it has traditionally devoted its energies. The Third Congress revealed a growing concern for home-school partnership. The president of the newly organized Pennsylvania Congress of Mothers reported that she had sent a letter to all superintendents of schools in her state "asking them to arrange meetings at which

12. National Congress of Parents and Teachers. *Golden Jubilee History, 1897-1949*, p. 16. Chicago: The Congress, 1949.

parents might confer with teachers." In 1899, the first parent-teacher association organized under the National Congress of Mothers was founded. Leading educators supported the idea, and the first decade of the twentieth century saw the Congress fostering parent-teacher associations as the most effective way of expanding its membership and its parent-education program.

The rapidity with which the parent-teacher association idea spread and the extent to which local associations appeared without any stimulation from a state or national body suggest that the feeling of need was widespread. This co-operative agency may justly claim an impressive array of accomplishments in a wide field of activities pertaining to child life and education. It has acted primarily as an educational agency and has operated through conferences, committees, and projects. In some states, however, it has also been a powerful action group devoted to the improvement of education. In this activity it has co-operated effectively with educators at the state level, but its greatest work has been in its more than 37,000 local units enrolling more than 6,500,000 men and women, of whom a half-million are teachers and school administrators. Through these numerous local units, it has promoted fellowship between parents and teachers and helped them to recognize their interdependence. Both parties have learned much about children and education as they have co-operatively attacked a wide variety of problems.

### *Co-operation of Labor and Business Groups with Educators*

Workingmen's associations were among the important groups to devote a great deal of energy to the promotion of the public school idea in the early part of the nineteenth century. These workingmen's associations, especially in Philadelphia and New York City, early rejected the pauper-school concept of public education and were among the most vigorous supporters of the basic statutes providing for a complete system of free schools. In this work they co-operated with the various voluntary education associations working toward the same end. They saw the free public school as an opportunity for their children to attain the competencies which would enable them to play an appropriate role in the American society of their generation.

## CONTINUED CO-OPERATION BETWEEN LABOR AND EDUCATION

While it is difficult to determine the extent of influence of any one organization and while there are those who feel that labor has in some instances received more than its share of credit for the beginnings and the growth of our public school system, it must be noted that the record of labor in support of education has been a strong, continuous one. The co-operation of labor and business with educators in vocational education has already been mentioned. Also, labor has given its support to many other aspects of the service, such as improved school housing, more adequate salaries, longer years of school attendance, more adequate finance, improved child labor legislation with its bearing upon educational opportunity, and clarification of the purposes of education.

Many labor leaders have felt that labor organizations and their contributions have not received reasonable and fair consideration in the public schools. There are probably some labor leaders who have viewed the school as an institution which should do more than it has done to further the special interests of labor. Despite these difficulties, *some progress has been made in co-operation between schools and labor organizations even in such difficult areas as the aims of education and curriculum.* An outstanding co-operative effort between labor and education has been carried on in New York State, where labor has worked closely with school people in the preparation of instructional materials pertaining to the labor movement in society.

In recent years, co-operation between labor and education has been difficult at times, not only because of the attitudes of many educators toward labor but also because of the preoccupation of labor with other pressing problems. Perhaps we are entering a period when this phase of co-operation can be revitalized and greatly extended.

## BUSINESS AND EDUCATION INCREASE CO-OPERATIVE EFFORT

Co-operation between various business organizations and education has not had as long a history as that between labor and education. This may be a result of the fact that business groups with an interest in social problems may not have been formally organized as



early as were some labor groups. Then, too, the children of business leaders could be provided for in private schools more readily than could those of laboring men. Some business groups have apparently regarded the public school enterprise as a costly venture, resulting in substantial increases in taxation upon their property and tending to encourage workers toward more independence and less willingness to accept the conditions they find in industry. Nevertheless, many businessmen have, through their service on boards of education, been involved in the educational service of their communities.

Relations between business interests and education reached a low level in the 30's, when important business groups favored cutting back educational services and charging tuition for secondary-school students in order to lighten the tax load. Business interests, representing a dominant force in our culture for many decades, found it difficult at times to co-operate with educators, since the former had a special-interest point of view and sincerely believed that the schools should teach this point of view. When the schools did not do so, business leaders tended to be disturbed. Their concept of co-operation at this time was not one based upon mutual respect and understanding. Neither did they recognize that properly the public schools should not serve the interests of special groups but rather the common interests of various groups.

Despite these long-time tensions, it is noteworthy that in recent years progress has been made in the direction of achieving co-operation between business and education. An example has been the work carried on by the National Advertising Council in its attempt to stimulate citizen interest in the public schools.

Equally important is the growing ability of business and education groups on the national level, as well as on state and local levels, to work together on problems pertaining to curriculum. A few years ago these conferences were marked by a lack of mutual respect and understanding on the part of the participants. Business groups were then inclined to want to "tell" educators what to teach and even how to teach it. Educational groups were fearful that business groups were not interested in co-operative endeavor for the improvement of the schools but, rather, in using the schools to further the aims of business groups particularly. Increasingly, however, the complexity

of the problems of education has been recognized, and more agreement has been achieved.

Business-education days—enabling business leaders to get into the school and to develop some acquaintance with its work and its problems, or enabling teachers to get into business and to develop fuller understanding of some of the problems and work of industry—have stimulated co-operation. Business-education days should be seen not only as ways of improving understanding between the school and one segment of our society but also as forerunners of co-operation between educators and many other groups.

In education, as in many other aspects of social welfare, the difficult problem of co-operating with various special-interest groups in society without being dominated by any of them cannot be ignored. Each interest group can contribute certain specifics of *genuine value because of its distinctive experiences, skills, and talents*. Each can also—in addition to its special contribution—serve its general citizenship responsibility and the general welfare. Herein lies *one of the nation's larger resources, awaiting more effective use in the co-operative effort to advance education*. Much has been achieved in this field—much remains to be achieved.

### *Conclusion*

In concluding this discussion of the manner in which we have been learning how to co-operate, *one should note that various groups have been co-operating for the good of public education for a long period of time. Not only has this co-operation extended over many years but also it has involved many segments of the society not described in any detail in this chapter.*

The success of the educational enterprise in our society has been achieved in very large measure by co-operation. Legal provisions for education have generally been the result of previous co-operative efforts and have afforded the basis for further co-operative efforts. Such legislation would have *relatively little meaning for the theme of this yearbook apart from the co-operative action of lay and professional groups*. The legal provisions constitute the skeleton or structure of our system of public education, while co-operative effort reflects the vitality, the life of the enterprise. Co-operative effort alone is not enough, however. Co-operative effort by *informed men*

who are *competent* in co-operating and who are motivated by the *fundamental human values* of a democratic society is essential.

In viewing the experiences which we have had in co-operation, it must be recognized that despite the great contributions which have been made through co-operation there have been many difficulties. At times co-operation has been of a low order and extremely difficult to secure. In some instances groups have sought and, even now, seek to "use" the schools. In other cases, schools may have attempted to "use" selected groups. Neither is a sound base for co-operation. Recent years have witnessed some of the most unreasonable and unjustified attacks against our educational institutions. The extent to which these attacks have been met successfully is a measure of the extent to which citizen co-operation has built a sound undergirding for public education.

Without attempting to answer the question of whether sufficient co-operation or adequate forms of co-operation have developed rapidly enough to keep up with the growing need for co-operative effort in light of the strains and stresses of society, one can certainly take pride in what has been achieved through co-operation. At least equally, however, one must recognize the enormity of the task ahead and the level of informed co-operative effort which is imperative. What has been achieved is but a beginning base for building stronger and more adequate co-operation to meet present and future problems. We have been learning how to co-operate but still have much to learn.

## CHAPTER IV

### *Co-operation Presents Some Problems*

KENNETH E. OBERHOLTZER

#### *Introduction*

Experience in co-operation has revealed a number of complex problems and some important issues which should be faced if difficulties are to be avoided and progress is to be assured. Studies have shown that co-operation has worked much more satisfactorily in some situations than in others and have directed attention to some of the factors which seemed to be important in determining success or failure.

The co-operative road to educational objectives can be made smoother for the participant in different types of co-operation if he knows and studies these problems. With these thoughts in view, this chapter presents some of the major problems and issues commonly arising in community activities together with pertinent comments and observations. Case studies of various types, analyses of experiences, statements of principles, and criteria and suggestions for improving co-operation are to be found in subsequent chapters. In the text of the yearbook as a whole, the reader will find at least tentative answers to many of the questions raised in the ensuing sections of this chapter.

#### *Problems May Be Related to Ideas, Meanings, Attitudes, or Functions*

##### WHAT IS THE "BIG IDEA" OF THIS MOVEMENT?

Public education in America has been periodically subject to the influence of general social movements (see chap. ii). In this process, the idea of intergroup co-operation has emerged as one of the most significant current movements affecting public education.

One of the characteristics of our society which has affected the development of public education has been a faith in local control of

public affairs. Increasingly, both lay and professional people have come to realize that public school education is one of the few social functions still remaining largely in the realm of local control. Some persons believe that this control is in the process of being wrested from the local communities but that the trend can be checked through co-operation on the part of community constituencies. Their view is that public school education is not a responsibility of professional educators alone, or of other groups only, and that public school education will be most vital when developed and supported through effective community action. But how can this best be brought about?

Chapter iii highlights the experiences and trends in co-operation in the field of education at local, state, regional, and national levels since our public schools were established. But the purposes and processes of co-operation must be learned and interpreted by each generation. How well have both professional and nonprofessional groups in our generation grasped the *meaning* of co-operation in the interest of public school education?

#### IS THIS A FAD? A FEAR?

To some persons, this idea of citizen co-operation for education is a fad, simply a popular current movement which is the latest way to do good in public education. These persons don't want to be left off any educational band wagon; so they climb on without having thought through the idea very carefully. Their principal concern may be for the personal advantages to be gained. In some cases, hasty initiative is attributable to professional persons and in other cases to lay persons. How can this hasty action be avoided?

The idea of community-wide co-operation may also spring from fear. Some have feared that professional persons have gone too far by themselves, have become too "progressive" or too "expansive" and, therefore, must have the restraining influence of other citizens to counteract the tendency. On the other hand, some educators have feared that public education is *losing in its race with the demands* of the times through primary reliance on professional action and, consequently, have encouraged intergroup action. Has this fear a real basis in many situations? Can better co-operative action dispel the fear?

## IS THERE A TENDENCY TO BE APATHETIC? OPPORTUNISTIC?

Any public institution can suffer from an apathetic attitude on the part of the people. Citizens have many responsibilities toward which they have shown considerable apathy, such as the responsibility for voting. Public schools have undoubtedly been affected by a lack of concern on the part of citizens who are, or think they are, too busy with their own private affairs to be concerned also about the public schools. Perhaps their apathy toward public schools is a part of the general pattern, or there may be special reasons applicable to public schools alone. In some instances, this feeling of apathy has arisen from repeated attempts they have made to propose improvements in schools—proposals which have not resulted in desired action on the part of school authorities. Too often it is difficult to persuade good citizens to serve on boards of education, on boards of the parent-teacher association, or on school-citizen committees. Apathy makes citizen co-operation difficult. How can this apathy be changed to active interest?

And where there are apathetic persons, there are usually opportunistic persons. Occasionally, self-formed citizen groups have come into being, presumably for the best interests of the schools. Sometimes they have been representative of only a small part of the community. Their principal purpose has been to capitalize on the apathy of the community in the matter of citizen participation in school affairs and to "put over" their special projects. Such groups frequently show a high degree of co-operation within their own ranks, but they either do not comprehend or do not want to accept the idea of broadly conceived citizen co-operation. How can such action be changed into a broader consideration of ways to improve the schools?

## WHEN ARE INDIVIDUALS CO-OPERATIVE?

## WHEN ARE GROUPS CO-OPERATIVE?

There are several basic concepts which need to be understood by both educators and other persons in the matter of co-operative action. For example, (a) all parties must be sincere in their approach to the solution of a problem; (b) there must be mutual trust among the persons in the group; (c) there must be mutual responsibility; and (d) the work of the group must be shared in terms of such factors as

the ability and interest of the co-operating individuals. While each person in the group shares the responsibility, the chairman and other officers have much to do with the creation of conditions which are conducive to co-operation. When different groups work together with equality of status, there is good evidence of co-operation. How can the essential elements of effective co-operation best be realized? How do we really know when groups are co-operative? When individuals are co-operative?

A misunderstanding sometimes arises in the relationship of two groups, such as a citizens committee and a board of education. If the board decides not to follow the advice of the citizens group, then the board may be charged with being nonco-operative. But this is not necessarily so. How can groups avoid such misunderstandings?

#### HOW ABOUT THE WORDS USED—THE SEMANTICS OF THIS TYPE OF CO-OPERATION?

Educators, like other professional people, have their difficulties with the meaning of words and phrases. There is no commonly accepted meaning within the profession for many widely used words, and the diversity of meaning among citizens groups generally is even more marked. So there is a problem in clarifying the meaning of certain words before the expression, *citizen co-operation for better schools*, can be expected to influence the interests and attitudes of American communities to an acceptance of commonly shared impulses such as the contributors to this yearbook contemplate. For example, "citizen" and "educator" are not terms which designate inferior or superior positions. Often persons without a teacher's preparation and experience assume that they do not have qualifications which would be useful in working for the improvement of public education. Or teachers may assume that, because of extensive professional education, they alone are qualified to suggest improvements.

The term "co-operation" has improperly acquired a meaning in some quarters which almost implies subversiveness. Some persons think of co-operation as the antithesis of competition, which is the backbone of American business enterprise. And, they ask, since schools are supposed to be lifelike, why introduce the "socialistic" idea of co-operation?

There are currently some misunderstandings between industry and the schools—misunderstandings which are due, in large part, to a difference of meaning attached to commonly used technical terms. To be more specific, the school term “general education” is sometimes misunderstood by industry; and the industrial term “profit” is sometimes misunderstood by schools.

In order to achieve co-operation, there must be a further clearing of the air in this matter of meanings. *How is this to be done?*

IS IT WORTH WHILE TO WORK IN THIS WAY?  
WITH WHOM? HOW BROADLY?

Not infrequently people are doubtful of the values to be achieved by co-operative action. The doubts are both general and specific. Some educators, for instance, believe that co-operation is valuable in the solution of school-housing problems but doubt the practicability of solving curriculum problems in this way.

More funds are usually required for school operations where the co-operative idea is put into practice because of the need for making additional provisions for substitute teachers, consultants, and the like, while studies are being carried on. The number of individuals participating in the planning of educational programs generally increases with the application of co-operative procedures. This means the expenditure of more public funds and more time on functions other than those directly related to instruction. Are we generally ready to expend the increased funds which are usually implied in increased co-operative activity?

Co-operative action may also be a time-consuming way to solve a problem. When the time required is considered, is co-operative action worth while when perhaps an equally good solution could be developed in a much shorter time by a single expert's action? The question arises in the everyday operation of public schools and is a perplexing one to the administrator, who frequently finds too few hours in the day to meet with many friendly groups that offer aid. For example, at present many special-interest groups are concerned about working with the schools on an advisory basis, each with regard to a particular phase of the curriculum. The opportunities for co-operative action appear to be increasing as more and



more citizen groups show a desire for co-operative action with schools. Should these groups join hands in their approach to the schools rather than operate separately?

Programs based on citizen co-operation should not consume all the time of the parent or the teacher, else their principal jobs in the home and the school cannot be accomplished. Under what circumstances, in what situations, may co-operative action be unnecessary or undesirable?

### *Some Problems Are Related to Organization and Procedures*

#### WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPAL WAYS OF CO-OPERATING?

Citizen co-operation has been developed in relation to public education in an amazing number of organized ways, and one of the prime questions to consider in each instance is the value of each of the principal ways.

Chapters v-x, inclusive, give descriptions of many ways in which citizen co-operation has developed in relation to public schools.

Frequently, discussions on public relations in education are concerned with groups and group activities, but probably the most important single relationship is that which should exist between parents and individual teachers. This is a person-to-person type of educational relationship; it has been fostered by both parents and teachers. In the matter of developing a curriculum for the individual pupil, this is a basic relationship. In the entering primary grades there appears to be rather generally a high degree of parent-teacher interest in the child, but this interest tends to become much less as the pupil moves on toward high-school graduation. What are the most profitable ways in which the individual parent and teacher may continue to work together? On what matters should they work together?

Even if all parent-teacher co-operation were on a high level, there would probably remain many areas of activity where school and community groups might well co-operate. Group action is common to our modern society, but much of it is highly competitive and not co-operative in nature. Co-operative action is not as common between groups as it is within groups. Nevertheless, educational

councils are increasing in many communities as a means of providing for co-operative action among groups concerned with schools. What determines whether the person-to-person, the association of groups such as in a council, or some other type of group co-operation is best in a given situation or with regard to a potential problem?

There is a tendency, too, to think of citizen co-operation in behalf of the schools as functioning only in a formal way, that is, through the committees, commissions, councils, or organized groups with other names. But co-operation can be very informal. This is true of both the person-to-person and the group-to-group relationships. What are the advantages of formal organization, and under what circumstances is such organization desirable as contrasted with the informal relationships?

#### WHAT LEVELS OF CO-OPERATIVE EFFORT ARE PRACTICABLE?

In general, there are six principal levels of activity which are open to citizen co-operation in education. They are: studying (including assembling of data), planning, interpreting, deciding, executing, and evaluating. Co-operation may be typical of any one of these levels of activity, or of a combination of some of them, or of all. In some situations co-operation goes along very well through the studying-planning-interpreting stages; but when the deciding stage is reached, a board of education may very properly say, "We'll decide what is to be done because we have the legal responsibility." Or interested groups, such as citizen committees, may study certain phases of a problem more or less independently and then participate co-operatively in planning for an adequate solution of the problem. How are we to decide which levels of activity are most amenable to the co-operative approach?

#### WHEN IS IT ADVISABLE TO HAVE LAY GROUPS ONLY? PROFESSIONAL GROUPS ONLY? MIXED GROUPS?

Assuming that, for a specific purpose, group action may be the preferred type of co-operative activity, one might ask: When should the group be composed *only of lay persons?* *only of professional persons?* *of both lay and professional persons?*

Several lay groups have national, state, and sometimes local edu-

cation committees composed of their own members who study and report on educational problems, as, for example, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States. On occasion, they consult with professional persons or employ such persons to direct studies for them. Some national lay groups have professional advisory committees which meet periodically with their own lay committees for the purpose of developing studies. What are the principal values of these different types, and under what circumstances of co-operative action are they most valuable?

Professional education groups were at first composed only of professional persons whose membership was determined largely by employment status. For example, teachers joined together in teacher or education associations. Parents also formed associations, and then the idea of a parent-teacher association evolved. The parent-teacher association is one of the most widely recognized and accepted of the "mixed-group" type of organization. Under what circumstances is this "mixed-group" type of relationship more valuable than the "lay group only" or the "professional group only"?

#### DOES THE SIZE OF THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AFFECT CO-OPERATIVE ACTIVITY?

Successful co-operation has been noted in numerous small communities and in several states, but the number of examples in large cities is relatively much smaller. Perhaps one should expect greater difficulty in achieving formal or organized co-operation in the large cities because of the sheer weight of numbers of persons involved and the diversity of interests shown. Is the incidence of community-wide co-operative effort found less often in larger cities because they are composed of several communities?

Reorganized school districts in rural areas bring to the fore some kinds of activities and problems which are not unlike those found in large cities. Both are frequently the product of consolidations of smaller communities into larger communities. And while they are officially joined together in the one larger community, there frequently persist some ideas that are characteristic of the smaller communities.

There are state, regional, and national problems in education

which are being studied by organizations of state, regional, and national scope. What special problems are of most interest to these organizations, and in what ways should state activities, for example, be related to local activities?

Citizen co-operation for better schools is taking place in connection with schoolrooms, schools, and state and local school systems. What particular kinds of problems may be solved best within each of these units of school organization?

#### ARE CHANGES IN SCHOOL ORGANIZATION NECESSARY?

School administrators and boards of education are affected by the impact of citizen co-operation in regard to the internal administrative organization of both schools and school systems. Co-operative activity frequently requires representation on committees, meetings with groups, and kindred activities that are much more time-consuming than a more traditional authoritarian administration. What are the most desirable patterns of school administrative organization which are emerging from successful co-operative experience? Does a greatly increased application of co-operation involve changes in the administrative organization of schools and school systems?

#### WHO SHOULD CONSTITUTE A GROUP OR COMMITTEE?

There are probably few schools or communities where all the people can or will work together on school problems. Consequently, the group, committee, or commission is resorted to as a means of representing all those concerned. Considerable emphasis has been placed on the idea of a broadly representative group, in terms of geographic areas, employment groups, racial groups, and the like, in a community. Sometimes such representation brings problems relating to competence, willingness to work, or perspective. It would appear that both the broadly representative and the restrictive types of groups have their places in this picture of community-wide co-operation. What are the guides to help select the most appropriate activities for each type?

Is the number of persons in a group of some consequence? Most boards of education in urban communities range in size from five to nine members, with seven the most popular size. Frequently, citizens committees have been composed of hundreds of persons

and have subdivided themselves into smaller groups for study purposes. Are there certain size patterns which are better than others?

#### HOW SHOULD MEMBERS OF A GROUP BE SELECTED?

One method of selecting a group is, in a sense, not a selective method. In this instance, a general invitation is issued to all interested persons in a community. Those who accept the invitation become members of the group. Should this way be used? If so, under what circumstances?

Another method of selection is by means of an election procedure developed in the community for the special purpose. For example, a council on education may be formed by the election of representatives from community groups which have established education committees. This manner of selection has the obvious advantage of securing individuals who have previously shown some interest in co-operative efforts and in education. When is this the best method of selection?

Still another method of selection is by appointment. The board of education, the superintendent, civic organizations, or other groups or individuals may choose to appoint what is now popularly known as an "advisory" group or groups. Capable persons can be selected in this manner; the size of the group can be readily determined; but jealousies may spring up or, sometimes, the group may carry the brand, "favorite sons" or "whitewash crowd," when controversial issues are being considered.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the several ways of selecting a group? Are combinations of these ways preferable in certain instances?

#### WHAT PREPARATION IS NECESSARY BEFORE STARTING TO WORK TOGETHER?

Does co-operative work come naturally? Co-operation with citizens groups has, relatively speaking, been given little consideration in the professional preparation of teachers and of administrators. The complexities of such co-operation should be self-evident to anyone who has read the statements of problems in this chapter or who has tried to work co-operatively in various situations. The popularity of the subject in summer schools and workshops is evi-

dence of the desire for in-service education by professional persons who have *missed a consideration of the topic in their preservice preparation*. There is no doubt but that preparation is essential, but of what kinds? and when?

The need for some preparation is not one-sided, because all citizens have to learn some of the procedures and ideas of co-operation too. Probably most of this preparation will have to be gained while persons are serving as members of groups, with the assistance either of printed suggestions in the form of a guide or of oral suggestions given by persons experienced in co-operative work. What are the best ways to assist citizens in preparation for their part in a co-operative activity *in the interest of the schools?*

WHAT ARE THE EXISTING ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES  
OF CITIZEN CO-OPERATION? HAVE THEY BEEN  
USED EFFECTIVELY?

There is probably no community without some experience in citizen co-operation affecting schools or other public services. Boards of education are usually composed of lay persons who have a sincere interest in working together with professional persons to achieve more effective educational programs. Yet boards of education and professional staffs can move apart in their respective activities, and the amount of co-operative effort can become relatively small. Board-staff relationship is one of the fundamental resources of citizen co-operation which should be examined for its effectiveness.

Parents and teachers work together both within and without the formal organization of a parent-teacher association. In many communities this type of activity has resulted in good co-operative work with mothers but in practically no work with fathers. How to interest the dads is a real question. Again, in some communities the parent-teacher association does not interest many nonparents. Consequently, "independent" citizens committees may be formed, resulting in questions about or even opposition to the newly formed organization. *Before starting a new basis of citizen co-operation involving the nonparent group, would it not be well to explore some modification of the parent-teacher association?*

Before the creation of new organizations, should there not be

some kind of inventory of existing resources? some evaluation of the effectiveness of existing organizations? Is there some kind of self-survey which a community could make to determine answers to these questions?

Furthermore, resources exist outside the community which can be invaluable in the development of citizen co-operation in the community. Colleges and universities, foundations, associations, and the like, are possible resources which, though available, are not used frequently as aids to co-operative developments. How can these resources be enlisted?

#### WHO STARTS THE BALL ROLLING? WHEN?

Is it the responsibility of leaders in education or of leaders in community affairs to start the co-operative "ball" rolling?

If the school initiates the activity by appointing a study committee, for example, there may be charges of stacking the committee for the school's viewpoint. If lay persons start with a self-appointed group, there may be questions as to whether or not it is a "pressure" group.

Often the purposes of working together are related to the power-group pressures within the community rather than to the school needs. In fact, this is one basis of setting up special types of co-operation in a community, that is, to wait until a pressure group shows its interest in a special school program and then to develop a special advisory committee to cope with the problem. Is this desirable?

"When the ball rolls" may have considerable influence on *"who starts the ball rolling."* If the activity begins during a comparatively calm period in the school's operations, there may be little concern as to who does the starting. On the other hand, if the activity begins as the result of sensational or radical charges by any citizens group, the starting activities may be of prime importance.

Is there a best way of starting good co-operative relations? When is the best time to begin?

#### HOW DOES THE GROUP ARRIVE AT ITS PURPOSES?

Groups are subject to changes in membership and to other difficulties which may cause them to get off the track unless they have

stated rather clearly in writing what they propose to do. Not only is a statement of purposes a valuable asset for good working procedures but it is also valuable as a guide to an evaluation of the work after it has been completed. If all groups are willing to work out a sincere, forthright statement of their purposes, successful and satisfactory working relationships are feasible. How does a group arrive at these purposes?

There are probably certain immediate purposes which impel groups to organize and to seek the co-operation of other persons. Reluctance to state these purposes may be the key to unsuccessful work as time passes.

The long-run purposes of citizen co-operation in relation to schools should likewise be of concern to all residents of the community. Unless the activity makes its contribution to the improvement of educational opportunities for the learners, boys and girls or men and women, it will fail to achieve its fundamental purpose.

#### WHEN DOES A GROUP WORK WITH ONE PROBLEM? WITH SEVERAL PROBLEMS?

Groups are sometimes organized to suggest solutions to one major problem affecting the schools; at other times they are organized with the view of studying several school problems. In the latter instance, the group is frequently subdivided into committees or may appoint additional persons on committees for the purpose of studying individual problems. What factors determine which of these procedures is more desirable?

Furthermore, there is the closely related question of how long a group should remain active in pursuit of the problem or problems. If, for example, a group becomes concerned with a curriculum problem, should it continue year after year, or should it be active for a more limited period? Continuing committees have the advantage of time to observe conditions leading to the solution of problems and to an evaluation of the results, but they may also have the disadvantage of continuing beyond the time of their usefulness into a period of gratuitous activity. How does one decide the length of service for co-operating groups?



WHAT ARE THE DESIRABLE RELATIONSHIPS  
WITH LEGALLY CONSTITUTED GROUPS?

Local boards of education constitute the most numerous lay groups concerned with public education; parent-teacher associations constitute the most numerous mixed groups; and teacher or education associations constitute the most numerous professional groups. The relationships among these several groups probably are the most important among the organized and legally constituted groups because of their sheer numbers, if for no other reason.

The board of education is generally the one legally constituted group which has the final power in a community to act on public school matters. The other groups are usually advisory in nature or derive their powers to act from some action of the board of education. City councils, city commissions or boards, and mayors may have review-or-veto authority affecting materially the operation of schools. What understandings or agreements are desirable among these community groups?

State boards of education or other state control bodies relating to public education have similar problems of relationship with voluntary organizations. Are there desirable patterns of relationship which will encourage the contributions of voluntary organizations, preserve their independence, and yet leave the authority in the responsible hands of the legally constituted group?

State legislatures are the authoritative groups which establish state policy. The influence of such professional groups as education associations is recognized in the form of public hearings on education bills, committee studies, and the like; but do these represent the best relationship to voluntary groups?

*Some Problems Are Related to Evaluation*

WHAT CONSTITUTES A JOB WELL DONE?

All over America, efforts are being made to utilize the best resources of the community in the interests of increasingly better educational opportunities through the public schools. If citizen co-operation results in the general improvement of educational opportunities, this is at least an indication of a job well done.

Schools are a means to an education, and schools constitute one

of the great influences in the development of children. But schools are not alone in this influence. Parents, playmates, and community institutions are quite influential too. The total educational effort in a community is, therefore, a combination of professional and non-professional effort. Sometimes this effort is co-operative, intelligent, effective; and sometimes it is not. How does one judge?

The builder also grows. Citizen co-operation in public education can pay dividends not only in the improvement of educational opportunities but also in the growth of the individual participants. *The quality and the extent of this growth afford another measure of value.* Are there good ways of assessing these values?

Citizen co-operation has some values per se. Co-operation can be achieved in both quality and depth of undertaking. In other words, there are some marks of good workmanship, of good technique, which should be a part of the evaluation picture. And how are these to be assessed?

#### WHO EVALUATES? HOW? WHEN? WHERE?

Who has the responsibility of evaluating citizen co-operation in the several types of situations which have been noted? how? when? where? These are difficult questions which have not been answered well, if one is to judge from available professional literature and the reports of case studies. It seems pertinent to observe that there is a dearth of evaluation instruments which are readily applicable to such a general movement as citizen co-operation for better schools. However, reliance need not be placed on formal evaluation procedures alone; there may be a place for informal procedures as explained in chapter xi. What are suitable guides for the evaluation of citizen co-operation?

#### HOW SHOULD EXAMPLES SERVE IN EVALUATION?

It is well to have the story of the historical background as it relates to citizen co-operation in education, a general accounting of some of the principal developments in such co-operation, a statement of problems, and a statement of guides to successful work; but this would not be a complete statement on co-operation in education.

Case studies of various types of prevailing co-operative activity

may, if properly prepared and used, present a promising means of helping the reader to evaluate his own situation. But case studies may not present the entire picture; they may emphasize the successes and neglect the difficulties. Moreover, the situation in one community or state is not likely to be identical with that in another. How should case studies be prepared to be most helpful? How can they be used most advantageously? In the chapters in Section II, case studies of various types are presented and some of their implications are analyzed.

SECTION II

CITIZEN CO-OPERATION IN ACTION

## CHAPTER V

### *Co-operation Helps Individual Classrooms*

GERTRUDE H. FITZWATER

#### *The Heart of the Program Is the Classroom*

In the judgment of most parents the measure of the schools' success rests on what is happening to their own children in the particular classrooms they are attending. Are the three R's well taught? Is citizenship education receiving proper emphasis? Is enough American history being included in the school program? Do teachers give sufficient attention to moral values? Are they really interested in their pupils? Current magazine articles, parent group discussions, and community criticism of the schools all testify to lay concern in these matters.

More specific are the comments heard over the back fence or the coffee cups, at the bridge table or the Rotarians' weekly dinner, on the farm or in the factory: "Ann has been in the first grade for five months and can't even read the first reader." "Jack's grandmother is so pleased with the neat letters he writes her. He spells every word correctly." "No one can read Tom's writing." "Our teen-agers have no respect for private property." "My fourteen-year-old Janet doesn't even know the preamble to the Constitution." "The twins learned so much from that trip to the home of the first settler in our county." "The fourth-graders who visited our grain elevator surely knew their manners and asked the right questions."

*The individual teacher and the individual parent are key figures in the success or failure of much that is done in the way of citizen co-operation in any school system.* Furthermore, it is in the individual classroom that many school-wide efforts toward co-operative endeavor originate. Even in schools or school systems where no over-all efforts are in progress, good teachers find ways of help-

ing parents to be active partners in the education of their children, and interested parents find opportunities to co-operate with teachers. The teacher who is sensitive to parents' desires for their own children, to the home situations in which the pupils live, and to the needs and potentialities of individual boys and girls soon discovers ways in which parents, teachers, and children can all work together toward the attainment of common goals.

It is difficult, in many instances, to differentiate precisely between adult participation in the affairs of the individual classroom and citizen activities which are involved in the total school program, as discussed in the following chapter. Activities which originate in one classroom may soon include the entire school. On the other hand, a school-wide program may have a variety of aspects related directly to classroom activity in general, while certain other features may be of particular significance to certain groups of children. The kind of report cards used, proposed improvements in the physical plant, a survey of vocational opportunities for young people in the community, policies regarding school excursions, and provisions for community recreation are all total school problems that may readily lead to co-operative endeavor on an individual classroom basis. By the same token, one teacher's efforts to help parents understand the advantages of modern methods of teaching reading or arithmetic may well lead to similar activity throughout the school.

While it is often difficult to draw lines of distinction between the activities of a classroom and those pertaining to the entire school, most of the situations involving citizen co-operation at the classroom level deal with problems of the instructional program and those of the pupils. Accordingly, major attention will be given in this chapter to illustrations which center on curriculum and pupil welfare in elementary and high schools and which are directly related to the classroom or homeroom.

### *Personal Contacts Foster Understanding*

In many school systems, especially at the elementary-school level, the visits of teachers to the homes of pupils and conferences between parents and teachers are important aspects of the co-operative program. As parents and teachers discuss the needs of children, it becomes evident that meeting those needs is a genuine concern of both the home and the school.

## TEACHERS AND PARENTS CONFER ABOUT INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN

Certainly the commonest form of educational co-operation is that which involves informal face-to-face conferences between parents and teachers about individual children. Many such parents seek out their children's teachers in the hope that they may together discover ways of solving the children's problems.

Instances of this simple kind of co-operation could be multiplied without end. One example must suffice at this time. Perhaps the best way to present it is to tell the story in the father's own words.

Our daughter is six and a half years old at present and is, we are assured, physically and mentally normal. She is our only child, and we are older-than-average parents.

It is our good fortune that her teachers in the kindergarten and in the first grade were not only skilled but, what is more important, they apparently loved and understood the children they taught. Hence, our child likes to go to school and has great affection for her teachers.

The incident I shall describe occurred in connection with reading when our daughter was in the low second grade. When we saw that she was having trouble, we endeavored to help her by teaching her the alphabet, the construction of words, and the sounding of syllables and words, letter by letter.

Soon, however, we began to see that our analytical approach may have been conflicting with the "picture" method of teaching reading about which we had heard. We did not want to stop helping our daughter because of the pleasure it gave us; yet we evidently were doing her no good.

When we consulted her teacher, we found that the child, because of her weakness in reading, had been moved from the "chicks" (top) group to the "robins" (next lower) reading group. The change had been handled so tactfully that neither we nor the child were particularly bothered by the step.

We asked her teacher to tell us about the "picture" method in reading and about ways in which we could really help our daughter. My wife discussed this problem with the teacher on several occasions and attended a few meetings of the reading class.

The teacher gave us a booklet that really told us both what to do and what not to do. We followed one suggestion in the booklet in particular and then, with the aid of the teacher, bought a picture dictionary and taught our child how to use it.

Last Christmas, after consulting with the teacher, we bought a set of McGuffey's Readers. Now our daughter reads a lesson from the Primer to me each night before I read a story to her from the Readers. She

seems proud that she can read to me, and the symptoms I mentioned above have almost completely disappeared. She is showing satisfactory advancement at all points in the grade and is gaining fluency in reading as well as an understanding of spelling.

While my anecdote is probably not unusual, it does illustrate what good teachers can do with "ignorant" but willing parents. And, I assure you, in such circumstances the parents who have been helped are exceedingly grateful.

#### PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES ARE REPLACING REPORT CARDS

In many localities, individual parent-teacher conferences are replacing the written report to parents, especially in the lower elementary grades. School systems in general report a high degree of parent interest in these conferences. At one elementary school in Battle Creek, Michigan, careful attention has been given by the teachers to the mechanics of scheduling these conferences.<sup>1</sup> No parent is asked to make more than one trip to the school. The appointment time is arranged in light of all known facts about that parent's activities. If possible, an appointment is made at an hour when both parents can come to the school.

In Inglewood, California, conferences are held between parents and teachers during a two-week period beginning the sixth week of school.<sup>2</sup> In both school systems, teachers place emphasis on "plain talk" rather than on pedagogue.

From two teachers<sup>3</sup> in the Pugh School, Decatur, Illinois, where the parent-teacher conference is the method used by the teachers of primary grades to report pupil progress, comes an account which illustrates how such conferences may lead to group action.

During conferences held with parents by a kindergarten teacher and a third-grade teacher, the conversation involved not only the progress of children but also ways in which the school and home could most effectively co-operate for the total welfare of boys and girls. The teachers discussed their hopes for improving the general appearance of their classrooms (one of which was a newly opened basement room) as well as for improving the instructional program.

1. Esther Rupright, "Let's Talk It Over," *Educational Leadership*, VII (February, 1950), 312-14.

2. Chester A. Taft, "Fostering Home-School Relations," *Educational Leadership*, VII (February, 1950), 315-17.

3. Ellmin Herrin, kindergarten teacher, and Grace M. Landsen, third-grade teacher. This illustration is given to show some of the values of parent co-operation.



Several parents desired immediate action and were not willing to wait for improvements to come through the regular requisitioning procedures. After talking with husbands and neighboring fathers and mothers, there was general agreement that action should begin immediately, so the homeroom mothers of each grade called separate meetings of the parents to initiate plans for action.

There were several problems or issues which arose at the outset. However, they were quickly brought into the open for clear and fair discussion in meetings where all major decisions were agreed upon by the majority. Special bulletin boards, bookcases, flowers, reading lamps, tables, and draperies were placed in one room. In the kindergarten room, parents made the framework for the playhouse and window boxes for the house. One father painted animals on the furniture and walls. Home-school relations were greatly strengthened, and teachers came to realize that parents were vitally interested in their children's school experiences. An atmosphere of increased security for children resulted as they saw their parents working for improved environment at school as well as at home. Upon completion of the project, a tea and open house was held for all parents and the public.

#### IMPROVED PRACTICES RESULT FROM GROUP CONFERENCES

Conferences between a teacher and a group of parents provide still another basis for co-operative effort. Such group conferences give teachers an opportunity to describe to parents the activity carried on in a classroom situation. Group conferences of this kind are usually promoted by the school or the teacher and do not have all the characteristics of mutually stimulated co-operative effort, yet they have often been the springboard to a program in which parents participate quite freely and often initiate activities themselves. When parents understand that they can contribute to various types of learning experience for the pupils, their interest in the school program is heightened and misunderstandings are frequently corrected. In such situations, valuable assistance is made available to teachers who are endeavoring to adapt their classroom procedures to the needs of their pupils.

At the McMicken Heights Elementary School in the Highline public school system near Seattle, a tea for kindergarten and first-

grade mothers not only provided a means for interpreting the school program to parents but also involved mothers in planning and organizing the affair.<sup>4</sup> Some of the parents felt that the real purpose of the kindergarten needed to be clarified, and the teachers felt that parents of the first-grade children should have a more thorough knowledge of child development at the six-year level.

Several kindergarten parents, the kindergarten and first-grade teachers, the elementary consultant, the school principal, a first-grade mother, and the school secretary participated in the planning. The kindergarten parents were to manage and serve at the tea; the kindergarten and first-grade teachers, elementary consultant, and principal were to present a panel and summarize the problems in a booklet. A mother was to illustrate the booklet, and the secretary was to duplicate it.

As a result of the project, the kindergarten program was revised, and first-grade parents were more co-operative and understanding of the first-grade work. All parents are now presented with the summarizing booklet each year.

A pot-luck supper in the Emerson Elementary School at Denver, Colorado, involved participation by first-grade children as well as their parents and teacher.<sup>5</sup> Although the teacher initiated the project, planning was carried forward by room mothers. The children and the teacher made table decorations and wrote invitations to all parents. They also worked on choral-reading selections to be given for the parents and chose the songs they wanted to sing.

#### INTERPRETATION IS NECESSARY

Good teachers use a variety of methods to interpret the school program to parents. The pupils are involved in many of these efforts. Some teachers and children have prepared news sheets for parents describing learning activities and stating the reasons for them. In other instances, pupils have explained various projects to parent-teacher groups. In one classroom, where children had worked to develop improved study habits, a committee of parents helped to evaluate the results. Some teachers have co-operated with the local newspaper, some have used large show windows in stores for class

4. Information provided by Miss Joyce Cooper, State Department of Public Instruction, Olympia, Washington.

5. Information supplied by Marie Farrell, teacher.

activities, and others have conducted television programs as a means of explaining to parents and other citizens the hows and whys of a modern school program.

In several communities, teachers have helped to inform board members concerning curriculum practices. In one midwestern school,<sup>6</sup> teams of from three to five teachers were invited to the homes of board members for a buffet supper, after which different phases of the school program were discussed. The teams included representatives from the elementary, junior high, and senior high schools.

Bulletins are still another means of interpreting to parents the kind of activity that goes on in a classroom. In an eight-page bulletin, "The Kindergarten Year," from the schools of Burbank, California, three pages are devoted to parent participation in the kindergarten program.

In many instances where teachers have made special efforts to interpret a classroom program to parents, they have identified a particular problem needing solution. Parents may be unhappy about the fact that children are not learning long division in the fourth grade. Fathers and mothers may view class trips as play and wasted time. Parents may be unhappy because they feel that the high-school program is not adequately preparing their boys and girls for college. Businessmen may complain about the lack of necessary vocational skills of high-school graduates. To some townspeople, music, art, dramatics, and physical education may be fads and frills which simply increase the tax bill.

Here are specific problems needing solution if a particular teacher and group of children are to experience the best possible learning program. The problem is often relatively easy to identify. In some instances, only interpretation by the teacher may be necessary. In others, parents need to discuss the matter. In still others, an extended period of school and community co-operation is necessary.

Some solutions may be reached through an individual classroom approach. For success in solving other problems, the weight of total school participation is required. In any instance, a classroom teacher needs to consider carefully the nature of the problem involved and just what type of approach promises the most desirable outcomes.

6. Loretta McNamara, "School Board and Community Learn about Curriculum," *Childhood Education*, XXVIII (February, 1952), 264-65.

### *Parent Contributions Enrich Classroom Programs*

Accounts from many schools show that parents, interested in their children and eager to do all they can to insure the best opportunities for them, are not only willing but anxious to do whatever the teachers ask of them. "This," in the words of one contributor, "is how co-operation seems to many parents."

In some communities, alert teachers and school officials have explained children's problems to the parents and have enlisted their help. In other situations, parents themselves have initiated projects and carried them to successful conclusions. In each instance, direct service to children has been the result of parent-teacher co-operation.

#### HELP IS GIVEN ON SPECIAL PROBLEMS

Emergency conditions sometimes provide opportunities for a co-operative attack on school problems. The principal of the Chelsea Park Elementary School near Seattle tells how parents and teachers participated in a school-work night.<sup>7</sup>

It was September and our school was on double session for the first time. Eight classes were being housed in four classrooms. The thought came that perhaps if parents and teachers could share and understand each other's problems there would be less tension. From this thought came the idea of a "work night."

We talked over the plan at a teachers' meeting and discussed various tasks that laymen might do. A general bulletin was sent to all parents, inviting them to come to school to work for an evening and mentioning some of the tasks that needed to be done. A refreshment crew was organized to serve coffee and sandwiches.

The response to the invitation was most gratifying. Instruction sheets were prepared in advance and presented at the door. Parents and teachers were teamed together as far as possible. Soon the building was ablaze with light and it began to hum with laughter and good fellowship. Everyone worked from 7:30 until 9:30 when a bell rang signaling all to stop their tasks and come for coffee. We met in one room for refreshments and to review the accomplishments of the evening. By this time, the teachers knew that they had a co-operative group of parents to work with, and the parents had a fuller and more sympathetic understanding of the problems of a teacher on double session.

Parents had completed many tasks that would provide for more desirable learning experiences for their children and a more attractive environment in which to live during the school day. They had helped

7. Supplied by Eunice S. Allen, Principal, Highline Public Schools.

to file pupil work papers, mount pictures for the social-studies unit file, sew denim book bags for the primary grades, paint coffee cans for storing clay work, make monthly room calenders, arrange supplies in the storeroom, sew curtains for the lavatories, put library pockets and cards in new books, and cut and stamp milk tickets.

More than the accomplishment of specific tasks was the friendly feeling that comes when people work together for a common cause. In this case a closer relationship had been established between home and school.

Mothers instituted a plan of helping to meet the needs of children in the Kingsley Elementary School, Waterloo, Iowa, where the facilities were incomplete when September arrived.<sup>8</sup> The new addition to the school building was not ready, and the school period for the first-graders was, of necessity, limited to three hours in the morning.

A quickly organized "board of strategy" composed of five interested mothers met and discussed a possible solution that would turn this temporary and minor crisis into an exciting interlude. It was agreed that each mother would plan to spend one afternoon each week working with the children. This included calling for them at school, providing lunch, planning and guiding activities for the afternoon, and delivering the children to their respective homes around three-thirty or four o'clock.

The classroom experiences were adequately handled by the school. The out-of-school experiences were worked out by the supervising mothers. Each mother, left to her own devices, came up with solutions in full measure. Every week the five mothers met to visit, to swap tales of what had transpired the week before, and to plan generally what was to take place the following week.

Afternoons were divided roughly into field trips and quiet activities. Children went on picnics, a fishing trip, and a cookout. They took a ride in an open jeep into the country and a trolley ride from Waterloo to near-by Cedar Falls. They visited the library and got their first library cards, took a tour to a new radio and television station, and went to the dog kennels and the school for dogs. They collected rocks, cocoons, flowers, and leaves. Simple materials were used to make animals, games, and badges. House plants were potted in foil-covered baby food cans. At various times records were played, stories read, and home movies shown. Crayons, paper, pencils, and puzzles were provided.

8 From information supplied by Mrs. Raymond Forsberg, a parent.

Hindsight would indicate that the project might have been improved by more thorough planning and scheduling. However, it was a lesson in co-operation and understanding for parents, children, and teachers. And it contributed much to the days of ten small people.

In the Springtown two-room rural school in Pohatong Township, New Jersey, with an enrolment of eighty-one pupils in the second and third grades, providing an adequate hot lunch for boys and girls was the channel through which parent participation flourished.<sup>9</sup> One person assumed responsibility for scheduling the parents who volunteered. Others contributed their time and cars to pick up and deliver the food if the cook was unable to do so. Still others, who for one reason or another could not prepare food, donated staples.

#### SPECIAL TALENTS OF PARENTS ARE USED IN THE CLASSROOM

In many schools, parents are participating directly in the improvement of class activities. Mothers have discovered that accompanying groups of children on excursions away from the immediate school environment and helping to challenge their interest is both a satisfying and stimulating experience. The mothers interested in art who accompanied a group of second- and third-graders on a sketching trip in an industrial New Jersey city, or the historically minded mothers from Michigan who drove children on a forty-mile trip of historical and geographical interest, were enabling children to have experiences which they would otherwise have missed.

The personal satisfaction that comes from contributing one's particular skill to a group undertaking is an important by-product of co-operative endeavor. Certainly, parents and other citizens who work with children in their classroom activities experience such satisfaction. And children's learning activities are the richer because of firsthand contact with experts.

One group of third-grade boys and girls at the Randall School, Madison, Wisconsin, discovered an abundant reservoir of resources in their parents and other people who worked with them.<sup>10</sup> Parents employed in the United States Forest Products Laboratory secured or prepared motion-picture films covering the use of forests, the pertinent related factual information, and the part played by our

9. From information supplied by Mrs. Henry de Fay.

10. From information supplied by Mrs. E. C. Halterman.

forests in contributing to our economy. Others who had hobbies of photography contributed their time and pictures, both slide transparencies and films of travel in the United States and other countries. The participation by the parents—both fathers and mothers—played a large part in developing good child-parent-teacher relations. Both parents and children developed an enthusiasm which motivated additional participation.

Numerous other persons who had achieved success in their special fields of work and who lived in the community were invited by the children to come to the school. A forest ranger brought an exhibit, built by himself, showing the nature of wood growth, the importance of wood, and its uses and varieties. A papermaker set up a miniature paper manufacturing process complete with raw materials, chemicals, and the finished product. A leather-goods merchant displayed his leather exhibit and discussed the effects of leather upon our everyday life. A research director at the University set up an incubator with eggs for hatching in the classroom. A traffic officer brought a combination squad car and ambulance to the school and demonstrated the use of the two-way radio in answering emergency calls. A textile authority brought her spinning wheel and loom to the class and spun yarn and wove fabric. A woman skilled in Norwegian painting invited the group to her studio home.

Various tools and devices too difficult for production by third-grade children were assembled by parents and brought to the classroom by the child or his parent. Among these items were bird feeders, paint boxes, and a puppet stage. The child was not only proud to show his parent's handiwork but felt a sense of belonging to the group since he was participating through his father or mother. These contributions also gave the classroom teacher an insight into the home life and cultural background of the children.

Children in certain classes at the Pine Hill (Alabama) High School found a wealth of information and help in the individuals who assisted in planning a week's camping experience.<sup>11</sup> Members of the State Department of Education, the State Conservation Department, and of the Fish and Game Branch, Tennessee Valley Authority, worked with the youngsters. An Assistant County Home Demonstration Agent and an Assistant County Farm Agent served as counselors. Parents participated in the planning and transported the

11. From information supplied by Mrs. Ruth Slaughter, teacher.

youngsters to the camp site, a distance of 250 miles. Indeed, without the help of interested parents and laymen, the camping experience could hardly have been carried through.

High-school teachers who are sensitive to youth needs are not neglecting the contributions of talented community members to the learning experiences of students. Senior students in psychology classes at Dreher High School, Columbia, South Carolina, use many adult participants in the development of their units.<sup>12</sup> Planning committees of students are appointed, and each member of the class is asked to *hand to this committee suggestions of activities* he would like to have carried on in connection with the topic and a list of people to assist in its development. As a result of this practice, many citizens have worked directly with the students.

In the unit on heredity and environment, for example, the biology teacher was asked to explain the biological foundations of heredity and the fundamental facts of reproduction. A social worker came in to discuss the importance of environmental influences. A genealogist showed how to trace pedigrees of individuals and gave a history of some of the families who had settled in the state. While the class was studying the biological foundations of behavior, a lieutenant from the State Law Enforcement Division came to the school to demonstrate the lie detector and to show that it merely measures some of the physiological changes which take place in an individual under the emotional stress of lying.

The particular skills that parents have to offer can be used to advantage in various group projects. When a group of youngsters at the Swansea School, Denver, Colorado, decided to make lollipops for Halloween, several mothers came to school to work with them.<sup>13</sup> Children worked in small groups with a mother as leader. Some groups used one mother's favorite recipe. Others followed one found in the new arithmetic text in a unit on measurement. Mothers helped children see the importance of accurate measurement, following directions, and observing standards of cleanliness and measures of safety.

Mothers were also present when a group of fifth-graders at the McMicken Heights Elementary School in the Highline Public

12. Information supplied by Grace Sease, teacher.

13. From information supplied by Margaret Cassidy, teacher.



Schools near Seattle, Washington, undertook a study of proper diet with special emphasis on the lunch program. They worked with committees in visiting places where special information could be obtained, demonstrated methods of cooking, assisted various committees in the preparation of food, and endeavored to have healthful and well-balanced diets at home.

When boys and girls in a sixth grade at the Swansea School, Denver, Colorado, went to work on a toyshop project, they found parents able and ready to assist them.<sup>14</sup> As help was needed in making items that would sell, the assistance of mothers was enlisted. For help in a particular skill, children visited a parents' craft group. Interesting objects were brought from home from time to time to show to the class. In some cases the project involved the whole family.

#### PARENTS AND TEACHERS TAKE INVENTORY

Illustrative of the way in which co-operative endeavor grows and develops is the story of how one elementary school and its patrons organized to make the best possible use of all available personnel resources. Although the project at this school, the Lamar Elementary School, Amarillo, Texas, was a total school activity, its results were directed to classroom projects.<sup>15</sup>

During the opening weeks of the school year in a new elementary building, teachers and principal were impressed with the wide range of occupations, interests, and special skills represented by the parents of the children in the school. At the organization meeting of the parents' group early in the fall, plans were set in motion to find out just what talents and hobbies were available for use in the classrooms of the school. A committee, consisting of two parents, a teacher, and the principal, was organized to look into the possibilities.

One of the committee members, a mother of two children in the school, was chosen to act as school-community co-ordinator for the project. She had the responsibility of preparing, for the approval of the committee, a questionnaire that could be sent to every parent in the community. A copy of the school's curriculum guide was used as an aid in selecting main points to be incorporated. Within a short time 240 of the 342 questionnaires sent out had been returned.

14. From information supplied by Madeline Roberts, teacher.

15. From information supplied by Charles V. Eads, principal.

The school-community co-ordinator summarized the information and set up a filing system under four large headings: collections, hobbies, occupations, and talents. Under "collections" were such items as foreign travels, rocks, stamps, plants, tropical fish, model airplanes, coins, records, and Indian relics. Hobbies which were listed included woodworking, photography, ceramics, weaving, leather and metalcraft, magic, puppet-making, radio, and Indian lore. A variety of special talents was represented—painting, dramatics, travel talks, playing musical instruments, speaking foreign languages. Among the parents in the school were geologists, ministers, teachers, lawyers, doctors, psychologists, and many more.

The resource file was placed in the office for use by teachers and others who had need of it. Original questionnaires were filed alphabetically in a central place for use by teachers and other school personnel. Records are kept up to date by the secretary. Newcomers to the school and community constantly add to the file.

As a result of the activity, many people have had and continue to have the experience of participation in a school-community project. Parents enjoy coming to the school to share their particular resources with children. Boys and girls profit greatly from their visits. Teachers, in turn, learn to know the community better and have a deeper understanding of the youngsters they teach and the homes from which they come. Parents seem to feel the school belongs to them, and an increasing number of civic groups are using the school auditorium. As a result of the participation of so many individuals in the program, parents are eager to have teachers use the vast resources at hand to provide a richer learning experience for children.

#### HOMEWORK UNDERGOES REVISION

In today's schools, homework assignments are no longer mere study assignments but are intended to require the joint efforts of parents and children. In one school, "a teacher sent to each home a mimeographed copy of instructions she was giving in how to participate gracefully in dinner conversation. She asked the parents to evaluate their children's participation for a week."<sup>16</sup>

Another school published a handbook which described general areas and specific ways of providing out-of-school experiences for

<sup>16.</sup> *It Starts in the Classroom*, p. 25. Washington: National School Public Relations Association, National Education Association, 1951.

children.<sup>17</sup> The handbook was written by a committee of parents and teachers.

In still another school, a group of parents of some exceptional nine-year-olds requested that work be sent home with the children.<sup>18</sup> After talking over the matter with the boys and girls, the teacher and the children made lists of things to do at school and things to do at home. The list of things to do at home included: working on words we need to know; reading to an audience; writing poems, stories, or plays; working arithmetic problems; making a scrapbook of animals or flowers; making a book of machinery, or of airplanes; making a peep show; drawing or painting; making a puppet; looking up information in reference books; collecting news items for bulletin boards; planning something for opening exercises.

Any list of homework activities in which both children and parents can participate could well be endless. A homework program which includes a variety of individual and group learning activities is another avenue for utilizing parent contributions as well as for building understanding of the program of the modern school and what it is trying to do for boys and girls.

#### FIRST STEPS ARE IMPORTANT

While most of these examples of parental service to the schools are teacher-initiated and do not involve parents in the planning and evaluation, such projects must be regarded as important co-operative activities. The point of view of one school official of Denver, Colorado, stresses the need for careful planning to use all possible avenues of parent participation.<sup>19</sup>

We believe that in our eagerness to involve parents more completely in the school program, we often overreach ourselves. In so doing, we fail to recognize the beginning steps which must be taken if ever we are to move to that type of co-operation that involves participation in policy-making or determination of appropriate educational objectives.

In summarizing the activities of parents in helping to develop a school library, the principal of Gregory Heights Elementary School

17. Paul J. Meisner and Robert La Cosse, "Parents Are Partners," *Educational Leadership*, III (February, 1945), 224-26.

18. Marcia A. Everett, "What about Homework," *Educational Leadership*, VII (February, 1950), 311-34.

19. Supplied by Mrs. Elsie Adams, supervisor.

in the Highline Schools near Seattle, Washington, states:

It was evident that the parents, as a result of this kind of co-operation, developed important appreciations of the school's contributions to their children's education. . . . They began to feel that they were intimately associated with a phase of their children's school experiences.

Most parents are sufficiently interested in the work of their children and of the schools that they will gladly co-operate in any promising activity regardless of who does the planning. Both experience and common sense indicate, however, that parents should be encouraged to help plan and initiate as well as carry through and evaluate projects. Co-operation then becomes more meaningful and beneficial for all concerned.

### *Classroom Projects Are Emphasized in Parent-Teacher Programs*

In increasing numbers, parent-teacher groups are planning their programs in such a manner as to place major emphasis on individual classroom activities. Illustrative of how such a program may operate is an account from the Roosevelt School, Fair Lawn, New Jersey.<sup>20</sup>

Roosevelt School was confronted with the problem of a greatly increased enrolment and inadequate facilities. In order to house the children, a part-time program became necessary in the first four grades. Since two classes and two teachers were meeting in the same room each day, it became increasingly difficult to plan for the customary evening meeting at which all teachers met with parents on the same night to become acquainted and to discuss the work of the children. The executive board of the parent-teacher association met with the principal to consider the situation, and a new plan was adopted which allowed parents and teachers of a particular grade to meet on a specified evening.

One teacher discussed the traits of children at the age level found in that grade. Parents were given copies of printed materials which the teachers had prepared. Another teacher discussed the reading problems of children and the methods used with those who needed special help. A third teacher and some of the boys and girls in the room showed slide films made by the children in connection with

20. Information supplied by Eleanor Hoagland, Helen Alexander, Mary Sullivan, and Philomena Donnelly, teachers.

social studies. At another meeting emphasis was given to the correlation of written composition, arithmetic, art, music, and spelling skills with units of work under way in a particular classroom. The values of audio-visual aids were emphasized, and, on occasion, recordings of some of the children's voices were reproduced.

A discussion period in which parents participated freely followed each presentation. During the discussion period, parents were seated at their children's desks where their folders and workbooks were available. At the close of the meeting refreshments were served by the room mothers.

In one midwestern high school the parent-teacher group includes students as well as adults.<sup>21</sup>

The Parent-Teacher-Student Council of Wells High School, Chicago, is concerned with curriculum planning, particularly as it deals with home and community. The core of emphasis for the ninth-grade program is "The Home," and it is particularly with this group that parents help plan a practical program.

The practice of appointing room mothers is one frequently mentioned in illustrations in this chapter and rather generally adopted by local parent-teacher groups. Designated mothers work with the teacher and children in an individual classroom—in planning parent-teacher activities or helping to provide more adequate school environments for children. In Scarsdale, New York, class mothers are responsible for interpreting the school to parents.<sup>22</sup> Critical parents often find it easier to direct their questions to a fellow-parent. Class mothers sometimes answer directly but often refer such inquiries to the proper person on the professional staff.

As parent-teacher organizations focus their attention on what goes on in individual classrooms, co-operative activity between parents and teachers will increase. The organized parent-teacher association can be a major force in bringing to many communities a sense of responsibility for their schools. As it concentrates its efforts on the instructional program going on in various classrooms, new opportunities will be discerned for parents, children, and teachers to work together.

21. Helen F. Storen, *Laymen Help Plan the Curriculum*, p. 34. Washington: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Education Association, 1946.

22. Jane Novins and Aileen W. Robinson, "Parents, Too, Learn by Doing." *Childhood Education*, XVIII (February, 1952), 165-67.

### *Community Needs Are Classroom Needs*

Extending the boundaries of the classroom beyond the four walls or beyond the limits of the school playground makes community-school co-operation imperative. The factory owner who conducts boys and girls on a guided tour of his plant shares an important learning activity with mothers and teachers and children. Members of the city council who answer the questions of a committee from a high-school civics class give reality to concepts which might otherwise be only words in a printed text. County health authorities who furnish boys and girls with vital statistics or conservation experts who demonstrate various types of land erosion are helping young people build up a store of knowledge.

#### THE COMMUNITY IS THE CLASSROOM

The Civic Experience Program for twelfth-graders in the Barton Vocational High School, Baltimore, Maryland, illustrates how extensively the success of such a project depends on citizen co-operation.<sup>23</sup>

The work in the course is based on the activities of various city agencies. To be eligible for participation, agencies must be non-profit, city-wide, have a program for volunteers, and have staff members qualified to conduct educational activities. Agencies that students have observed and worked with include the Red Cross, the Housing Authority, the Enoch Pratt Free Library, the Maryland Workshop for the Blind, and Goodwill Industries.

Learning takes place on three levels: (a) Orientation (listen and learn). An agency leader gives the entire class an overview of his organization. This usually takes place at the first meeting. Teachers may also assist in laying the groundwork by the use of pamphlets and slides. (b) Observation (see and learn). Students observe the agency in operation. They get into the shops and offices; see equipment, materials, and processes; ask questions and learn from first-hand contacts. (c) Participation (do and learn). Students are given tasks which show them what is involved in the kind of service the agency performs.

On Wednesday of each week, the twelfth-grade students and their teachers leave school at noon and spend the remainder of the

23. From information supplied by Alyce M. Doss, teacher.

day with one of the co-operating agencies. The class is divided into several groups, each of which works with a different agency. An agency representative conducts the activity and assumes responsibility for the afternoon. The work is divided into cycles—each group spending two, three, or five weeks with one agency. During the course, students may become well acquainted with five or more agencies. On Thursday or Friday a classroom period is spent in discussion of the Wednesday experiences.

A consideration of contemporary problems by young people does not always stop with mere study. Action becomes important to boys and girls who have gathered facts, held discussions, interviewed leading citizens, and reached certain conclusions of their own. High-school students in Stamping Ground, Kentucky, canvassed the community in order to learn about living conditions. Denver teen-agers made a survey of citizen opinion on daylight-saving time and took their results to the city council. In Battle Creek, Michigan, high-school students took an active part in securing passage of a special tax levy for school-building needs. Philadelphia boys and girls, from kindergarten through twelfth grade, co-operated with citizen groups in helping to plan a better city.<sup>24</sup>

Such action on the part of children and young people requires extensive co-operative endeavor. It demands skill in human relations on the part of all concerned with the project. Children must learn to be sensitive to the opinions of adults, to see the place of their particular pet project in the total community picture. Adults must view pupil efforts as important and of genuine learning value and must be willing to give them the assistance they need. Teachers must be aware of the peculiar needs of the students with whom they work and the available resources for meeting those needs.

#### CLASSROOMS SERVE THEIR COMMUNITIES

Enrichment of community life and service to citizens results from many classroom projects. A particular program may or may not be initially related to classroom activity. Often it is initiated by an individual teacher as a community service project. In most instances, however, citizen co-operation is necessary to the success

<sup>24.</sup> *Toward Better Teaching*, pp. 189-222. 1949 Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Washington: National Education Association, 1949.

of the program. What begins as a service project initiated by one individual becomes a group activity that draws people closer together in their joint efforts for enriched living for all community members.

In a number of small communities in upstate New York, home and community living have been strengthened and enriched as a result of service projects originating in certain special classes.<sup>25</sup> Music, vocational-agriculture, homemaking, and physical-education teachers were key figures in a number of these activities.

In one community, after the crops were harvested, the vocational-agriculture department sponsored a one-week tractor school to overhaul tractors so that they could be used as snow plows during the winter. A farm machinery repair class met weekly for twenty weeks with an average of eleven people in attendance. Under the direction of the homemaking department, a clothing class for mothers was held. Attention was given to clothing repair as well as to making new garments. After class meetings, adults participated in folk dancing in the school's recreation center.

A number of the music teachers directed bands during the summer months. Band members included adults as well as high-school students. Village businessmen recognized the drawing power of the Saturday night concerts and, in some communities, assisted in paying the music teacher's salary. In other communities, the music program was made a part of the summer recreation program and was financed by the village or town.

In one school, the music program, during both the regular school term and the summer vacation period, provided for the participation of pupils and adults in the community chorus and band. People were encouraged to participate in music activities on a family basis; each year a family concert consisting of instrumental and vocal selections by family groups is held in the school auditorium.

Physical-education teachers were active in planning evening and summer recreation programs. These teachers not only were largely responsible for planning the various activities but they were also active in arousing interest in the communities to secure the necessary support.

25. Charles O. Fitzwater, "Principles Underlying the Community Use of the School in Rural Areas." Unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Cornell University, 1947.



Students co-operated with one homemaking teacher in serving younger children in the community. They organized and conducted playground activities for twenty-four preschool children for a two-week period during the summer.

In Midland, Michigan, a program which began as a service by business to the business classes in a school eventually became one in which the students of Midland High School rendered valuable assistance to the community.<sup>26</sup>

After a number of conferences with the personnel of the standards department of the Dow Chemical Company, the chairman of the business-education department asked for the privilege of allowing a few of the outstanding business-education students to observe the employees of the payroll department at work. An observation period for these students was arranged in the spring of 1939. After a short time, it was suggested that these students be allowed to help the regular employees whenever and wherever they could be of assistance.

This small but well-organized and executed plan marked the beginning of the co-operative program in the Midland schools. In 1941, it was carried into other local offices, and a similar program was started in the field of distributive education. Because of the high quality of their work, their co-operative attitude, and their desire to do their job well, these students completed the foundation for a program which has continued to grow.

The program has done much to build good relationships between business and the schools. It has encouraged a high quality of preparation on the part of the faculty and high accomplishments on the part of the students. It has developed in employers a confidence in the abilities and personal qualities of young people and a desire to work with them.

### *Citizens Help Plan and Evaluate Classroom Programs*

As parents and other citizens engage in joint projects with pupils and teachers, attention is frequently directed to the how and why of instructional programs. Mothers who accompany boys and girls on trips or work with them in the classroom frequently ask questions or make suggestions about the instructional program. Local

<sup>26</sup> From information supplied by Wilfred Sweet, co-ordinator, Business Education.

government officials who guide students in their study of some phase of community government will most likely judge the school by its pupils. Businessmen who employ the school's graduates suggest how the school may better meet the needs of future employees.

Alert teachers listen to the suggestions, the criticisms, the questions. They are sensitive to the rich source of help that is revealed and eager to find ways of using it.

#### FIRST-GRADERS AND THEIR PARENTS SHARE LEARNING AT HOME AND AT SCHOOL

In the Mellichamp School, Orangeburg, South Carolina, a first-grade teacher who initiated a unit on "Sharing Experiences" did not stop with obtaining parents' suggestions. She provided opportunities for guidance and instruction as well.<sup>27</sup>

The teacher chose "sharing experiences" between parents and children as a particularly appropriate way to revitalize the casual type of family life that is too commonly found in present-day society, as a channel for building greater home-school understanding, and as a means of meeting the basic emotional needs of youngsters. For the project to be successful, she knew she would need the help of parents. After an initial meeting with room mothers, all parents were invited to participate in the planning.

At the first meeting of the parent group, the project was explained and defined. Procedures and probable goals were considered. The teacher was chosen as permanent co-ordinator and secretary for the group. Parents thought they should keep a record of the work done in the home by the parent and child. In that way, efforts could be evaluated as the project proceeded. It was agreed that the group should meet periodically throughout the year.

From the beginning, work was carried on in the classroom through sharing housekeeping tasks and responsibilities. The experiences which the child and the parents chose to work on in the home were selected by mutual agreement. Children and parents shared a variety of experiences—gardening, rooting and growing potted plants, household tasks, bird study, knitting, collecting rocks, taking and developing pictures, fishing, swimming, trips, and picnics.

27. Information supplied by Mrs. Elise G. Richards, teacher.

As the group proceeded with the project and during the parent meetings, problems arose which were of concern to the children or their parents. There were times when they needed help on behavior problems or needed new ideas to stimulate better growth patterns. Parent discussion groups were held. Films and filmstrips were shown to parents and children from time to time. Parents were furnished books, pamphlets, magazine articles, and other reading materials, according to their needs. Occasionally, during the year, joint meetings and discussions were held with other groups in the same school working on similar projects.

A series of workshops was also held. These involved child as well as parent participation. With the assistance of the county librarian a story-hour workshop was held in the county library. Stories were told, poems read and dramatized by the children, discussions were held, and all media of story-telling were on display—children's magazines, newspapers, poetry, records and recordings, musical stories, audio-visual aids, good comic books, and names of good radio and television programs with the stations broadcasting them and the time when they could be heard.

The art supervisor helped with an art workshop held in the art room. A fun-and-frolic workshop, using games and other ways of sharing leisure hours, was held in the classroom. The homemaking teacher helped in directing a homemaking workshop. During this time, parents and children actually cooked and sewed together. A building workshop, held in the high school's mechanical shop with the shop supervisor assisting, was planned for an evening so fathers could attend. Parents and children worked together making toys, games, and doll furniture which they took home with them.

The greatest problem in carrying out the project was the lack of opportunity to reach all parents. Many worked during the day and some at night. Some could not attend regularly. Transportation was a problem for some, and a small minority was indifferent. A few parents wanted to solve all behavior problems at once. However, after working with the group for a while, they began to realize that the solution often takes time, much patience, and persistent work.

As a result of the experience, more families learned to enjoy each other. They had things in common to talk about and discuss. Chil-

dren had a greater feeling of being part of the family. Statements from parents indicated that they gained a better understanding of their children and their problems and how to help solve them. One mother's statement is illustrative of those from a number of parents:

Since we have always shared our experiences, I thought at first I would receive no specific value from the project. Before long, I realized that our experiences heretofore had been my planning and Nicki's following. I learned that she enjoyed things far more if I participated in the actual doing of the thing. We have a better working and playing relationship, and she includes me in her projects now.

#### A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL MEETS THE NEEDS OF SUPERIOR EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS

Parents of children in the eighth grade at the Grant Junior High School, Denver, Colorado, worked with teachers and pupils on a special course for superior students.<sup>23</sup> The project was started at the suggestion of the co-ordinator of instruction to remedy a weakness in the instructional program. The testing program and some parent criticism seemed to indicate that pupils in the higher intelligence-quotient group were not living up to expectancy in academic subjects.

A special class was started for superior pupils in the latter half of the eighth grade. It was an experimental course for a six- to eight-week period to be selected if parents and children thought it would be more helpful to the pupil at this time than experiences in other fields. This work was continued into the early ninth grade with some pupils.

Members of the experimental group were selected after a conference with all teachers who had these pupils in classes. Parents of the boys and girls were then invited to the school, and the project was explained to them and to the students. Possible content for the course was presented, and parents made suggestions for further topics of study.

The class was set up on the hypothesis that isolation of certain academic skills for more direct instruction would produce study and work habits more compatible with the potentialities of academically minded pupils. Plans were made with other teachers to carry

23. Information supplied by Evelyn Elfstrom and Lucille Darrab, teachers.

over into their classes the skills and habits that were emphasized in the special class.

At the end of the project, students were given an evaluation sheet to mark for themselves and also one to take home to their parents. The student's own evaluation sheet covered specific goals and techniques which the class had set up. The parents' evaluation sheet was broader in scope. Some of the outcomes pertained to improvement in the major skills involved in regular classes, better ideas of organization, more awareness of problems, and greater creativity. It was interesting to note that, in homes where parent enthusiasm was greatest, students seemed to seek and achieve more.

Major problems arose over scheduling the work, trying to fulfil the needs of students from so many different classes, and overload-ing the superior child who is already inclined to select too many electives and activities. Choice of students to participate in the group has also been a problem. Some parents wanted a child who was not academically inclined to be included. In other instances, pupils themselves requested membership in the group when they were not chosen by the teachers.

#### BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES HELP PLAN A HIGH-SCHOOL PROJECT

The vocational-education classes for all Seniors at Central High School, Kalamazoo, Michigan, were developed through the co-operative efforts of a school-community committee.<sup>29</sup> The project grew out of a discussion between the principal and three teachers who were interested in helping students become acquainted with vocational opportunities in and beyond the community and in helping them make wise vocational choices based upon their interests and abilities. Representative citizens of the community were consulted, and a co-operative committee was organized with some members from the local personnel association and others from the faculty of Central High School.

Some of the specific problems considered by the co-operative committee were the content of the course, teaching procedures and materials to be used, availability of community resources, and

<sup>29</sup>. From information supplied by Theral T. Herrick, Director of Curriculum.

methods for evaluating the course. The solutions to these problems were agreed upon through co-operative study of the interests and needs of students. Recommendations and final decisions were reached after considerable experimentation in the classroom.

The committee also made plans and set up guides for group visits to industrial plants. They also worked out procedures for industrial conferences. The conferences were planned so that every student in the vocational classes had an opportunity to confer with at least one person actively engaged in the field of the student's interest.

As a result of the planning, visits to industry became more worth while than they had been in the past. The explanations, materials, and motion pictures used prior to tours and the discussions following the visits made for more meaningful trips. Another significant outcome was that students became more interested in local business and industry. In turn, business and industry became more interested in understanding the work of the school.

#### ADVISORY COUNCILS CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVED VOCATIONAL-AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

Reports from two high schools in widely separated parts of the country reveal a high degree of co-operation in the development of programs in vocational agriculture. An advisory council for agricultural education at Watseka High School, Watseka, Illinois, was both the cause and effect of expanded services and facilities in this department.<sup>30</sup>

Six years ago, Watseka employed a half-time teacher of agriculture. About twenty boys were enrolled in high-school vocational agriculture. There were no classes for young farmers or adult farmers. The facilities for agricultural education included a very small and barren classroom and an improvised shop.

An advisory council was organized in 1947. It has twelve members, ten of them from farms and two from the city of Watseka. The members were chosen after consultation with representative farmers in the community. In selecting members for the council, emphasis was placed on their competence and the respect which

30. Information supplied by H. M. Hamlin, Professor of Agricultural Education, University of Illinois.

they enjoyed in the community, their interest or potential interest in the school's work in agricultural education, their ability to work democratically with others in a team, and the degree to which they represented the community. The council has worked with all phases of the program in agricultural education, but it has been especially interested in developing a program for young and adult farmers and in improving individual instruction on the farms of those who have been enrolled in all classes in agriculture. A board member, the high-school principal, and the agriculture teacher are ex-officio, nonvoting members of the council.

Substantial changes in the farming of this community are resulting from the work of the department. One farmer, a member of the council, has said that it is only since the school became active in adult education in agriculture that a program adapted to the special needs of the community has been provided. Five men are employed part-time as teachers of adult classes to supplement the work of the regular teacher, who has afternoons available for working with boys on their farms and for teaching young farmers. A new building with excellent facilities and a new shop for farm mechanics have been provided.

The council has helped to develop a systematic, well-organized program of adult education. Committees of farmers, chosen by the council, work with the teachers of each of the classes for adults. Currently, the council is sponsoring its second survey of the community with special emphasis upon the needs and interests of farm operators and the needs and desires of city owners of farms for instruction in agricultural education. It is also working on a systematic reorganization of the curriculum in agricultural education from the elementary school through the adult division and toward a systematic statement of policies to be recommended to the board of education.

Partly as a result of the work of the council, a school-wide citizens committee was organized by the board of education in 1951. This group, including some who had been active in the council for agricultural education, has taken as its special project for 1952-53 the development of a general program of adult education in the school system for city dwellers as well as for farm men and women.

In Central High School, Monmouth-Independence School Div-

trict, Oregon, an advisory council is at work.<sup>31</sup> The political significance of uniting two communities, Independence and Monmouth, in one school program made it desirable to organize an advisory council to meet the needs of the majority of people interested in agriculture. At the same time, it was to serve as a means of drawing the communities closer together through co-operation in the program.

The advisory council consists of nine members, selected on the basis of their farming interests and their particular location in the community. The first step in the selection of possible members was to contact several successful farmers in the community for names of individuals who might be of assistance to the vocational-agriculture program. The names of those selected were then submitted to the superintendent, who, in turn, recommended them to the board of education for approval.

At the present time, the council consists of men interested primarily in dairy farming, raising swine, producing cereal grains, horticulture, grass-seed production, raising vetches and peas, and poultry farming. A manufacturer of farm equipment represents business interests. A school board member is also on the council. His primary responsibility is to answer questions dealing with school policy and to take back to the school board recommendations made by the council. Meetings have averaged six or seven each year.

The council has been instrumental in initiating and organizing a number of different projects. It proposed an adult-education program for the community. A ten-week course on soils was developed to meet an urgent need. This year, the council again surveyed the community. As a result, two classes, one on farm crops and the other on farm shop, were set up. Members of the council also studied the program in vocational agriculture and recommended minor curriculum changes.

#### FUTURE TEACHERS STUDY A COMMUNITY

In a number of colleges, young people preparing for teaching are required to spend a certain amount of time working with community agencies. Future teachers gain much valuable experience working with citizens who are interested in community improve-

31. Information supplied by Alvin M. Leach, teacher



ment activities. Other colleges are requiring future teachers to spend full time living in the community where they do their practice teaching and to take an active part in community life.

Included as part of the seminar plan at one state teachers' college is an opportunity for a group of students to live in a particular community and to study it intensively.<sup>32</sup> Usually a rural community is selected. One year, however, a school neighborhood in a city system was chosen. To plan for the study, a group of fathers and mothers was invited to have dinner at the home of the principal. Officers of the Parent-Teacher Association, the Neighborhood Association (which includes persons who do not have children in school), and the Park Association (embracing several neighborhoods) were present at this meeting. The purposes of the study were explained, and plans were made for a very full and profitable week. Activities included exploratory trips through the neighborhood; visits to homes, housing projects, institutions, and industrial plants; interviews with prominent citizens; and many visits to classes in the school.

The students heard the plans of the Neighborhood Association for welcoming new families into the area, for getting them into recreational activities and evening craft workshops or other classes, and for canvassing the neighborhood to encourage everyone to beautify homes and yards in harmony with landscaping proposed for the housing project. Many group discussions were held in the school throughout the week. The whole community took pride in the fact that it had been selected for study by this group of college students. Citizens helped with the study wherever and however they could. The school and neighborhood, as well as those students who were soon to be teachers, apparently gained much from this experience.

#### MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR CO-OPERATION

These examples of curriculum planning indicate that citizens can aid materially in improving and evaluating instructional programs for children and youth. It is in this area that opportunities for

32. *Action for Curriculum Improvement*, p. 81. 1951 Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Washington: National Education Association, 1951.

co-operative endeavor are still largely untouched. It is hoped that many future efforts toward co-operation in classroom activities will utilize citizen contributions to the fullest extent and will involve future teachers in planning richer educational programs for boys and girls.

### *Present Programs Can Be Strengthened*

The reports presented in this chapter<sup>33</sup> reveal that citizen co-operation at the classroom level is recognized as desirable in all types of communities throughout the entire country. A high degree of enthusiasm for such efforts and a willingness on the part of parents to participate in them is apparent. Teachers also recognize the values that come from co-operation. It is safe to assume that, *where citizen participation in school planning exists, classroom programs are better than they would be without such assistance.* In addition, these citizens undoubtedly bring to today's schools a laudable understanding and acceptance of an educational program that meets the needs of boys and girls.

It would appear that more parents and other citizens are helping in elementary-school classrooms than in high schools and colleges. Parents of younger children are more apt than parents of older children to take an active part in the affairs of the school. Moreover, all indications point to the fact that teachers and principals in elementary schools are at present taking the leadership in utilizing citizen co-operation in the classroom.

The great majority of examples of citizen co-operation reported in this chapter were initiated by the teacher or the school. It is undoubtedly true that this is the case in most co-operative projects at the present time. Herein lies opportunity for growth and improvement.

It is important that parents see clearly their responsibility to participate in the total education of their children. Mere criticism or a hands-off policy on the part of citizens generally is not enough if the schools are to render the service that most communities expect of them. That this point of view is being rather generally accepted

33. For additional illustrations see, especially, *The Community School*. Fifty-second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953.

is indicated in recent comments by nationally recognized leaders of business organizations. For example, a pamphlet for industrial leaders states, "You have a common interest with teachers in helping students develop as responsible citizens. . . ." <sup>34</sup> With reference to how to get acquainted, it points out, "We sit down together and get to know each other by sharing ideas, talking through mutual problems, and building future plans."

Teachers and other school officials need to examine carefully their relationships with parents and other members of the community. Are parents welcomed on a partnership basis with full recognition of the unique contributions they have to make to the education of their boys and girls? Are all groups welcome to visit the classrooms? Is everything done by the staff to make the classroom truly a community center and the school a community institution? Are the classroom and community atmospheres such that parents feel free to make suggestions, confident that they will be given an appreciative hearing? Are parents' suggestions used by the teachers to improve the program of the individual classroom? It is wise for professional educators to realize that the schools belong to the people and that leadership, in one form or another, is the prerogative of all.

A considerable number of teachers see in co-operative endeavor an opportunity for children and parents to work together on classroom projects. Children and parents enjoy a pot-luck supper. Mothers and fathers work with boys and girls in workshops. Mothers come to school to help with cooking activities. Boys and girls seek the aid of experts in developing a unit of work. Indeed, much co-operative activity would have little purpose if children were not involved in the process as well as being benefited by the end result. This is as it should be. There are many opportunities for citizens to work with teachers *for* children. Valuable as these services may be, the instances in which citizens work *with* children have more of the earmarks of true co-operative endeavor.

Situations in which citizens work with teachers and pupils in planning the classroom program are still too few. Undoubtedly, co-operation on projects planned by the teacher—or by the teacher

34. *Your First Meeting—Getting Acquainted with Teachers in Your Plant Communities*, p. 3. New York: American Iron and Steel Institute, 1953.

and the pupils—is a necessary step before parents and other citizens are ready to assist in planning, carrying through, and evaluating instructional programs. Moreover, from the point of view of child development, co-operation at this level is greatly to be desired. Educators might well give more thought to the type of activity carried on by first-grade children, parents, and teacher in Orangeburg, South Carolina (pp. 96 ff.), or to the vocational-agriculture advisory councils (pp. 100 ff.). In the latter instances, a well organized group assumed major responsibility. Parents, boys and girls, and teacher worked together informally in the unit, "Sharing Experiences." Each method is commendable and appropriate in particular situations.

As far as the schools are concerned, some of the steps which should be taken to encourage and facilitate citizen co-operation in improving the work in individual classrooms are:

(a) Teachers, generally, should have better preparation, not only in the teacher-training institutions but through carefully planned in-service programs, for working effectively with citizens of the community (see chap. xii for further discussion).

(b) Teachers and administrators should recognize that satisfactory citizen co-operation often starts in the classroom and must function successfully on that level if it is to be meaningful in a school system. Special encouragement should, therefore, be given to all teachers—and particularly to those at the secondary-school level, where the organization tends to provide serious handicaps—to devote particular attention to significant activities which involve the co-operation of citizen groups.

(c) The board, the superintendent, and the community leaders should recognize the value to the community as well as to the public school program of meaningful citizen co-operation at the classroom level, should understand that extra time and effort on the part of the teacher are often required for a satisfactory program, and should, therefore, authorize such adjustments in the schedule or work load as are found to be necessary for best results.

### *Everyone Benefits from Co-operation*

Whatever the strengths and weaknesses of present co-operative activity at the classroom level may be, evidence points to the fact that these group efforts have been of great value to the participants. All are benefited by having worked together for better classrooms and schools.

Teachers have discovered a wealth of untapped resources that have greatly enhanced teaching and learning. *Community acceptance of the school program comes more readily when community members are involved in its development.* Sharing the task of educating boys and girls has brought to those teachers who have been willing to try it a sense of satisfaction and security that can come only when one enlists the help of others in a cause of common interest. *Teachers who work with citizen groups come to feel a sense of membership in the total community that fosters further community activity.*

Children have been the recipients of numerous benefits resulting from joint activity. Boys and girls not only have richer instructional programs but also enjoy greater security when home and school unite their efforts. Parents know what is going on in the classroom and work with boys and girls to achieve desired ends. Youngsters have a sense of importance as the contributions of their parents and friends are welcomed and used by the group. They feel that they are truly members of the community as they study community living and contribute to projects of family and community betterment. For boys and girls who participate in various types of co-operative endeavor, the classroom extends beyond its four walls and the opportunities for learning become limitless.

To parents and other citizens who help with the instructional programs of boys and girls come the satisfactions that accompany understanding and participation. They learn to know the teachers as people, as well as professional educators. They recognize that good teachers and conscientious parents are working for the same objectives for the benefit of boys and girls. They come to believe that more is to be gained when all work together for these ends. They know and understand what is going on in the schools. They are recognized as members of a team. Their contributions are unique and important to children and their teachers. Without them, the schools would fail to do as good a job as they are capable of doing in preparing the citizens of tomorrow.

## CHAPTER VI

### *Co-operation Improves Individual Schools*

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AND

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In this chapter attention is centered on the improvement of programs in individual elementary and secondary schools through the co-operative efforts of citizens. The story of how individual schools are improving their programs is based upon reports of projects undertaken in various parts of the country. These reports indicate that the individual school is a natural unit for developing constructive relations with the community and for strengthening the foundations of public education.

#### *Co-operative Activities for the Individual School*

Many kinds of activity are needed in connection with the individual school. These range from conferences between parents and teachers, usually growing out of the classroom experiences of pupils, through studies of the entire program of the school. Nearly every school has a more or less active parent-teacher association whose interests and activities cover nearly every aspect of the program. Frequently there are dads' clubs, school improvement groups of one type or another, or groups concerned only with certain aspects of school work.

Every school has some problems which can be solved more satisfactorily through citizen co-operation than by the school staff or the school administration. In fact, many problems simply cannot be resolved by the school staff alone. There are still other problems which require a system-wide approach, all schools in the system working in co-operation with the central administration.

## PROBLEMS FOR CO-OPERATIVE ATTENTION

Any analysis made by members of a school staff will usually bring into focus a number of problems on which the help of the community is needed. Similar analyses by parents will direct attention to some of the same problems and to additional problems. The fact that some of the problems, as seen by patrons of the schools, differ from those recognized by educators need not be surprising. The points of view differ. Informal discussion will usually result in agreement on matters of mutual interest.

A school which is close to the community it serves should be in unique position to deal with some of the problems arising out of social tensions. The public school usually has children from different races, classes, and creeds. The opportunity which this provides for developing a spirit of tolerance and a program of understanding of the problems associated with daily living should not be overlooked. They can best be dealt with by a program in which the school and the community merge their common interests and work co-operatively to effect solutions.

Many adults are turning to schools for help in dealing with the problem of juvenile delinquency. The individual school community affords an opportunity to study the relationship between juvenile delinquency and home conditions or community conditions in a small area. The school and the community can work together to provide the kind of recreational facilities, work experiences, and learning opportunities best suited to the needs of the immediate area. Some schools have co-operated with community agencies in dealing with the problem of vandalism and the care of school and community property.

The public is asking the schools to do a better job in their health programs, many of which are sadly in need of improvement. Schools are frequently lacking in equipment, space, and personnel. Programs are often dull and unimaginative. This is a kind of problem the individual school can tackle with all the vigor at its command. There are numerous instances recorded where, through joint study and action, the school and the community have surveyed the health status of students and have studied health conditions at home and in the neighborhood. Together, they have enlisted the support of

other competent agencies in arranging for the correction of health deficiencies in individual students and have provided better health and recreational facilities for all the young people. In many communities the support of parents and other interested citizens has been of great value in improving such conditions.

The accident rate in the nation has reached alarming proportions. Hundreds are killed each week in traffic accidents and thousands die each year in home accidents. Certainly this is another problem for the individual school and the community to attack in a co-operative manner. The conditions in homes and the nature of the community surrounding the individual school make it imperative that this problem be approached at the individual school level.

The public is looking to the schools to do a better job in vocational guidance and preparation for vocations. Successful and happy adult life depends in no small measure on how a person feels about his job and how well he is suited to the work he is doing. In this modern world where the industrial, business, and economic structures have become complex, it is difficult for a young person to sift through the vast web of opportunities that confront him and come out with a suitable vocational choice. The nature of the vocational problem that each school faces will be greatly influenced by the kind of students in attendance and the work opportunities in the community. An extensive program of community co-operation is essential to the fulfillment of an adequate program of vocational guidance and preparation.

There is a growing demand for programs that will provide youth with a better sense of moral and spiritual values. What should be done in a community can best be determined by co-operative study involving parents and teachers. Some excellent programs have been developed in this manner.<sup>1</sup>

In many communities concern has been expressed for better teaching of what some have termed "Americanism." Fear of the spread of communism has resulted in a demand that the schools do many things—some of which are cause for serious concern in themselves. Minority pressure groups are demanding the right to censor books and speakers and school offerings of various sorts. No school faculty can deal wisely with these grave problems alone. Many of them

1. National Education Association, *Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools*. Washington: Educational Policies Commission, National Education Association, 1951.



touch upon areas of extreme sensitivity in relation to our ways of living and our assorted beliefs. The methods by which they are handled must be adjusted to the community.

These are only a few of the problems that our citizens are asking their local schools to help solve. How the school can remake its curriculum to provide a program which will contribute to the solution of these and many other problems growing out of our modern life is a Herculean task. One thing is certain, the task can only be met by parents and teachers and other citizens facing these problems together.

### *Preparing for Co-operative Effort in Individual Schools*

There are two important steps which should be taken in every school system if a wholesome program of school and community co-operation is to be developed for the individual schools. The first step calls for the establishment of general school policies which are necessary to enable the individual school to have the degree of autonomy required for developing co-operative projects. The second concerns the preparation to be made within the individual school itself. It is important that the relationships of the individual school to the general administration of the school system be clearly understood in matters involving community co-operation. Yet little will be accomplished through the schools unless each school formulates plans and procedures for working co-operatively with parents and other citizens.

#### NEED FOR APPROPRIATE GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

Community co-operation in education finds its best soil for culture in school systems where suitable general administrative policies and procedures have been developed and are understood by all members of the staff. Most building principals and teachers hesitate to develop new practices and procedures without definite assurance that the board of education and the superintendent are in favor of what they are trying to do. This assurance is provided when appropriate and clear-cut policy statements are adopted by the board and made known to members of the professional staff. This practice frees individual initiative and encourages principals and teachers to engage in activities for strengthening bonds between school and community.

Besides providing security and inviting progress, definite policies regarding citizen co-operation minimize the danger that individual school staff members may engage in unwise practices. Too often unwritten policies are misinterpreted and translated into actions which are detrimental to the school system and embarrassing to those in authority. This may occur in systems even when policies have been clearly defined and communicated to the staff, or when the staff has participated in their development. It is least likely to occur, however, when appropriate policy statements are available in written form and when a central clearing agency has been established so that representatives of building units may share their ideas and experiences and receive counsel from the general administrative staff.

Another important consideration is the extent to which the individual school is free to work with the public. Policies that call for a more or less uniform type of program throughout the system seldom achieve the best results. They do not permit flexibility for adapting a program to needs and conditions within the immediate school community. An individual school should have the right and encouragement to build its own program of school and community co-operation under policies that stimulate local initiative and action.

#### PREPARATION WITHIN THE INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL

No school group should embark upon a co-operative program without thinking through the procedures which should be followed. Decisions must be made as to whether each teacher shall go his own way, how various projects should be co-ordinated, and whether guides should be developed. The experiences of schools that have successfully completed programs involving citizen co-operation offer some general suggestions that may well be considered.

The principals of these schools agree that it is best not to attempt to impose a program of co-operation upon the staff. They point out that teachers must understand the necessity and see the value of co-operative undertakings before much can be accomplished. Even after teachers begin to recognize this type of program as something in which they would like to participate, many will hesitate so long as it is apparent that a considerable burden will be added to their already overcrowded schedules.

The suggestion is underscored heavily that the individual school

principal should move slowly with the staff in initiating co-operative projects. In a number of instances, the enthusiasm of beginners has resulted in a confusion of responsibility and the development of considerable ill-will. It is much better to try one thing at a time until enough experience has been gained for parents and other citizens to understand the role they are to play.

It should be the function of the administrative staff in each building to help create an atmosphere of relaxation and security for teachers who wish to engage in co-operative projects. Their freedom from tensions and pressures makes it possible to develop wholesome attitudes and to release creative powers that otherwise would be lost.

The professional staff of the school as well as other residents of the community must be conditioned to the acceptance of change. When administrators and teachers embark upon co-operative undertakings, they should stand ready to receive suggestions for modifying the school program. Unless they have open minds, there is danger that many suggestions will be taken as personal criticisms. Similarly, unless other citizens are genuinely interested in suggestions, teacher proposals for the improvement of home and community life may be resented. Not infrequently parents accuse school staff members of being too idealistic and impractical.

As a final suggestion, school staff members and the parents of school children must recognize the need for evaluating their efforts. Systematic evaluation is essential to the development of procedures upon which effective co-operation can be established.

### *Organizing for Co-operative Action in Individual Schools*

Since pupils, teachers, parents, and other citizens have a contribution to make in solving school and community problems, the question arises as to how their resources may be organized for co-operative action. The answer to this question is found in the understanding and observance of acceptable principles of group action in a democratic setting.

All who have worked with community groups know that it is important in the early stages of organization for someone to supply leadership and to help the group develop a sense of unity. It seems to be commonly expected that the principal or a teacher will supply

the initial leadership, especially if the problem or project for consideration originated within the school. This may be all right in many situations if the arrangement is only temporary—merely to help get started. One goal in any co-operative undertaking should be to have leadership emerge from the group. This should occur naturally when it becomes apparent that some member possesses the necessary personal qualifications and specific understandings.

It should be recognized that leadership generally develops slowly. One condition is that the problems under study make sense to members of the group. Another is a feeling of friendliness and an atmosphere of easy communication. Moreover, people must have the assurance that their opinions are wanted and that they will not be criticized and placed on the defensive for comments and remarks they make.

The group must know the limits within which it can function and make its own decisions. Nothing will dampen group enthusiasm and sincerity of purpose more quickly than the knowledge or suspicion that what is decided may be changed completely by someone else. *Even if the group knows that it cannot go beyond making recommendations to the board of education, still the right to make those recommendations satisfies this condition. It is the combination of these elements which brings about the development of leadership and the solution of problems for the improvement of individual school programs.*

Experience shows further that small co-operative groups enjoy greater success when formal organization is minimized. There is a strong likelihood that members will not participate as freely when they are required to comply with a set of procedural regulations. Often the regulations become a distraction and blot out the purposes for which the group is striving. The essence of good organization lies more in getting members to accept responsibilities in line with their interests, insights, and abilities.

As a group learns to work together, the members also learn that there is much more to co-operative action than expressing opinions and preparing a report. They discover that successful projects are the result of earnest inquiry and the careful observance of steps followed in problem-solving. Although the techniques used may vary

from place to place, the need for defining a problem, collecting information, interpreting data, planning a course of action, and checking the outcomes remains fairly constant.

### *Illustrations of Effective Co-operation*

Selected illustrations of projects reported by both elementary and secondary schools will now be presented in some detail. These projects and the ways in which they were worked out vary widely. All of them, however, represent significant and, usually, successful efforts to improve the work of individual schools through lay-professional co-operation. Following the more detailed descriptions are brief references to other projects that illustrate various ways of working on the problem.<sup>2</sup>

#### AT THE ELEMENTARY-SCHOOL LEVEL

*Parents Help Open a New School.* The principal of a new school<sup>3</sup> near Decatur, Alabama, describes how parents from two small four-room schools were used to help organize a new program resulting from a merger of the two schools into a new single unit. This illustration shows that parents generally want to be helpful and can provide valuable assistance if the individual school will but open its doors to them.

Officers from the parent-teacher groups of the two smaller schools started the project by calling on the new principal and asking how they could help combine the materials of the two schools, as well as their efforts, to make the new school a good one.

The first step was to set up a working organization. Parents welcomed the opportunity to meet with the staff about every two months and discuss such policies as amount of homework to be given; reporting to the first grade; parent visitation; landscaping the grounds; and program-planning. Out of this has grown a night meeting about six times a year for the further discussion of school policies.

In May, after school closed, volunteer parents helped faculty members pool the library books and redistribute them for homeroom

2. The authors of this chapter desire to express their appreciation of the co-operation of the many persons who submitted materials for use in the preparation of this chapter.

3. Information provided by Frances Nungester, Principal.

*Parents and Other Citizens Help Organize a Banking Project.* A teacher in the Richland School,<sup>7</sup> Richland, New Jersey, with an enrolment of 120 pupils, became interested in the use her pupils were making of their spending money. Through the co-operation of many members of the community, she was able to start a banking project for the entire school. The story reported by her explains the project:

As I became acquainted with the ways of the children, I was amazed and disappointed at the unwise spending of money. Realizing that one of the ten imperative needs of youth in education calls for the wise use of money, I decided that, with the help of my principal and our supervisor, I would launch a banking project without specifying a minimum amount that a child must deposit. The activity was open for participation to all classrooms in the Richland School building.

There was no special selection of responsible personnel—they automatically grew out of the situation as it arose. This was true of the children as well as the adults. Those who participated in evolving the structure of the general plan included the teachers of the building, the supervisor, our local bank personnel, and the parents of the children in our school.

Our supervisor helped me set up a plan to include our entire student body. This included a bankbook for each individual, deposit slips, and checkbooks, all made by the children. We also set up a file system where we kept deposit slips, canceled checks, and each child's bankbook. A loose-leaf notebook was arranged with a separate sheet for each child where the following data were recorded: date, deposits, total deposits, withdrawals, balance. This was kept up to date on each deposit day. When a withdrawal was to be made, the rules were: first, at least fifty cents must be left in the bank; and second, a valid reason must be given for the withdrawals. Withdrawals were very infrequent for, by this time, a desire to save was becoming quite evident throughout the school.

With the advice of the head of our local bank we decided that, for a beginning, we would deposit our money in one over-all account under the name of our school. The detailed individual deposits and pertinent records were the responsibility of the school. Five of the more capable children were selected to act as bankers for each banking day, which was held on Thursday of each week. Even though these children were only fourth- and fifth-graders, they showed acceptance of responsibility which paralleled that of adult businessmen and women.

As in any new endeavor, there was opposition from a few parents who felt the children were too young to save. Eventually they did see things in the proper light. The project has stimulated a significant interest throughout the entire school district. Our bank worked closely

7. Report prepared by Viola Di Renzo, teacher.

with our supervisor through the summer months to draw up a plan that will reach more schools and more children. This year six schools are carrying on the project. The bank has provided a bankbook for each of the children of the entire system who wish to take part. In this manner the bank now is handling individual accounts separately.

The project has definitely proved its worth in several ways: The children have an entirely new set of values regarding the use of money; they have a knowledge of procedures in banking; they are putting their money to better use by exercising judgment; the comments from the many different homes are very favorable; the children have a definite desire to continue in the savings plan.

*An Activity Program Grows.* The parents and children of the Caroline Brevard School<sup>8</sup> (enrolment 400), Tallahassee, Florida, have enriched the curriculum of their school by a program of activities designed to meet the needs of the children of their community. Probably the most outstanding activity and the one that has brought about the most co-operation on the part of the community is the plant clubs. Largely because of the interest and energy of a few parents, this has developed into a co-operative project in which the junior and senior garden clubs of the city have been very active. The plant clubs meet on Tuesday and Thursday from two to three o'clock. Each Tuesday one or two members of a garden circle meet with them to demonstrate various types of plants, methods of planting and cultivation, arrangement of flowers, table decorations, use of wild flowers or plants, decorations for special occasions, rooting and grafting of plants, and many other topics.

In addition to members of the garden circles, the children have enlisted parents who have developed hobbies in special plants, some who do photography, some members of the State Forestry Board who have helped in securing pine trees for planting on the school grounds, and several nurseries that have contributed plants and suggestions for using them and have helped provide speakers for meetings. This year a member of the State Improvement Commission helped the group plant a living Christmas tree. The culminating activity of this group for two years has been a spring flower show, arranged and planned by the plant clubs, but participated in by the whole school. The principal reports:

8. Report prepared by Mable Hamilton, Principal.

Although our school has increased in enrolment and in number of teachers, the activity program is being continued. Some changes are made each year as the needs and wishes of the children vary somewhat. A significant outcome of the program is the fact that parents in other parts of the city have asked that similar programs be started in their schools.

*Social Service and Community Improvement.* A great deal is being written about the values that accrue to the school that brings the great wealth of human resources of its community into the school to help in the improvement of the program.

It is equally true that a great many values await the school that takes the children out into the community to work with the members of the community on projects that give the children a chance to help with social service and community improvement. Those who have carried out such projects testify to the true educational values that come to the children who engage in them. They also point out that this is an excellent way to build desirable community relations. The public that has been conditioned by its past training to think of the school as a place where children study books can get a better understanding of the modern program of education by having this opportunity to work with children and to see some of the values that come from their community service activities.

As an outgrowth of one of the forums of the Home and School Association of the Mackay School (400 pupils), Tenaflly, New York, the principal<sup>9</sup> promised the parents to help them get some action if the local movie theater failed to comply with the demand of the parents that a better type of movie be provided. The manager of the theater said he couldn't change the programs. It was all a matter of block-bookings and other problems beyond his control.

The teachers, children, and parents, together with some other community leaders who acted as observers, set up a volunteer organization to run their own movie theater in the school on Saturdays. The programs which they organized lasted through six months of the winter and spring.

The principal of the school, who took a leading part in this community-wide project, tells what happened as the result of their program:

9. Based on a report by Dr. Charles T. Dieffenbach, Principal.



The theater owner capitulated. The manager "left," and the new manager co-operated fully. The group of persons which met with the theater manager became a permanent committee in our elementary parent-school groups. The theater and this committee agree on programs. The theater turns on lights at the end of a Kiddie Show. Two or three parents attend every Saturday matinee and act as ushers. This gives tone and confidence to the children and their parents. The parochial-school parents have joined us now. Occasionally the theater owner slips and needs prodding. Parent-scheduling is tedious at times. We have improved picture selections and conditions at the movie; we have given parents another area in which they can serve and build good relations with the school.

*Initiating a Program of Parent-Teacher Conferences.* The Lockwood Elementary School of 275 pupils is a rural school of eight grades near Billings, Montana. The principal of this school reports an interesting project<sup>10</sup> which he and his teaching staff initiated. The project concerned individual reporting to the homes as a supplement to the regular reports to parents.

The principal writes that, as a background for the project, each of the eight homerooms chose three homeroom mothers. One of these mothers was chosen by the pupils, one by volunteers from the mothers, and the third by the teachers.

The homeroom mothers were called into the school during the first month of school. Since this was the first time parent-teacher conferences had ever been held in this district, it was necessary to explain to the mothers why the conferences were needed, how much time would be given to them, and what parents might expect to gain from the conferences.

Each homeroom mother was given a list of parents she was to contact a few days before the conferences were to be held. During this contact she gave the parents on her list the information she had gained from the meeting of the homeroom mothers at the school. At the same time she asked the parents what time of the day or evening would be most suitable for them to come to the school for their conference. This information was then given to the principal, who set up a schedule for each family and teacher and sent the schedules home with the pupils. Three of the homeroom mothers set up a transportation committee that offered transportation for any families that needed it.

10. Report prepared by Marvin Klampe, Principal and Superintendent of School District No. 26, Yellowstone County, Montana.

There was 88 per cent participation in the conference day. Questionnaires sent to parents and teachers indicated that they considered the conference worth while and wanted it continued. Consequently, two such days were scheduled for the 1952-53 school term, one in the early part of November and the other during the last week in March.

The principal has made the following comment:

Our community is on the outskirts of a city, and many of the parents, both fathers and mothers, work in the city. Therefore, they have very little opportunity to visit our school. By setting aside one or two days during the year for special visitation, most parents will take the time to come to school since it is set aside especially for them. Our school board was very co-operative in permitting us to dismiss school during these conferences. The individual conferences were scheduled for fifteen minutes each, which the teachers felt was long enough for most of their cases if they kept the conversation on the subject at hand. However, there are a few special cases where a twenty- or thirty-minute conference would be desirable.

*Parents Operate a Hobby Program for Children.* A hobby program has been in operation in the Chatsworth Avenue School<sup>11</sup> (enrolment 711), Larchmont, New York, for many years. The original intent of the program was to provide after-school activities for children in an effort to relieve parents who might be engaged in war work. It was also felt that the children needed activities that would relieve some of the tensions that had been caused by the war. This program has continued successfully through the years and has grown both in attendance and in the variety of activities offered. Some 440 children are now enrolled with over 90 mothers and 4 teachers participating in the program.

The program is completely sponsored, financed, and expedited by the parent-teacher association. Teachers distribute cards to the children in the classrooms. Parents prepare descriptive brochures of the various hobbies offered and state the basis for eligibility for each hobby. All cards are sent to the office on a specific date. These cards are then given to the hobby chairman, who tabulates the registration for each activity.

The principal of the school meets with the hobby chairman at the end of each year to evaluate the program which has just been com-

11. Based on a report by John J. Madey, Principal.

pleted. A careful analysis of each activity is made, and suggestions for improvement or change are offered for the next year's program. The chairman of the hobby committee and her assistant also meet with the staff of the school for the sole purpose of obtaining suggestions and criticisms about the preceding year's program. All data are then compiled and presented to the new hobby chairman at the beginning of the school year so that the program will continue to meet the needs and interests of the children.

In the opinion of the principal, this is a most noteworthy project because it brings parents, children, and teachers together. They work toward a common goal. Parents begin to appreciate the task of the teacher as they work with groups of children. Teachers realize the contribution that parents make to the children. School and community work together. It is a very valuable project for a school to incorporate in its program, especially when it can be kept on a completely voluntary basis.

#### AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL

*Two Co-operative Projects in a Small, Six-Year High School.* The town of Weston, Massachusetts, is a residential suburb of Boston with a population of slightly more than 5,000.<sup>12</sup> A movement for closer relations between the public schools and the community began with a proposal of the Weston League of Women Voters that a survey be made of the school system. Authorized by a formal vote of the Town Meeting, on the recommendation of the School Committee, the survey laid the ground work for the subsequent development of several projects involving school personnel and community members.

One of the recommendations growing out of the survey dealt with the marking system and the method of reporting pupil progress. The survey committee took the position that these practices should be studied thoroughly and brought up to date by the high-school faculty. The principal presented the committee's recommendation to the faculty. Teachers agreed that the system of marking and reporting pupil progress needed a major overhauling, but they disagreed as to how it should be done, due to sharp differences in viewpoints concerning the aims of a marking system.

12. Based on a report by Julius H. Mueller, Principal, Weston High School.

Nevertheless, it was voted to empower the principal to appoint a committee to study the problem and to propose a more acceptable marking system, including a new report card and a new permanent record card. The recommendations of the committee were accepted by the faculty without a dissenting vote, probably because the committee members represented the diverse viewpoints existing among members of the staff, and all felt that their particular points of view had been adequately championed.

The somewhat revolutionary change in the methods of marking and reporting pupil progress called for a carefully planned public relations program prior to their actual use. This was done in several ways. First, homeroom teachers acquainted pupils with the proposed changes and secured their reactions to them. Next, parents were informed of the proposed changes through the principal's bulletin that was sent to each home monthly. Finally, a selected group of parents and other citizens who had been active in the school survey were invited to discuss the new marking system, permanent record card, and report card. As a result of this action, the new report card was readily accepted by the community upon its initial appearance, despite the opposition of a few parents and students in the high school.

A follow-up study of graduates from the Weston High School was the problem of another project that brought school and community together. In this instance, the follow-up study was initiated by the Program Committee of the Parent-Teacher Association. It was the feeling of this committee that a report on the graduates of the local high school would be an effective means of answering those in the community who had been outspokenly critical of the school.

This high school is a six-year unit with an enrolment of 320 pupils. An excellent reputation for high standards and for a forward-looking educational program is enjoyed by the institution. This view, however, is not shared by all citizens in the community. Being a community that is privileged economically, it has grown at an alarming rate during the past decade, has faced unusually heavy expenditures for schools and related services, and is still determined to retain its rural characteristics in spite of its proximity to Boston and the growing tendency toward urbanization. In this setting, many parents are inclined to look with more favor on private schools at the secondary level than on public schools. They think these private schools do a

better job of preparing young people for college. For this reason particularly the high-school staff welcomed the idea of having a citizens committee make a follow-up study of the graduates.

The committee, which was named by the parent-teacher association, included six members representing a cross section of community opinion and three members of the school staff, namely, the high-school principal, the director of guidance, and a classroom teacher.

Known as the "product committee," the members decided early in the study to limit their work to a determination of how effectively the high school was preparing boys and girls for higher educational institutions. Those who graduated over a six-year period were selected as the subjects for study. In gathering data on graduates during this period, it was found that of the 410 pupils who entered or transferred to the ninth grade only 219 remained to graduate. There were two principal reasons for withdrawal, namely, attendance at private schools and family moving from the community.

The committee then turned its attention to the post-school activities of the 219 graduates. It found that the graduates divided themselves roughly into three groups. One-third of them continued their education at a regular, four-year degree-granting college. One-third continued their education in terminal, two-year schools. The remaining third did not continue formal education after graduation from high school.

The committee next sought answers to the following questions about the two-thirds who continued their education in two- or four-year colleges: (a) What do the records show as to how well these graduates did on standardized achievement tests compared with national norms? (b) How well did they do on various tests given by the College Entrance Examination Board? (c) How do their Freshman marks in college compare with those received by other Freshmen?

After the information had been gathered and analyzed, a report was prepared and presented to the parent-teacher association. Many charts, graphs, and some lantern slides were used to illustrate the report. The findings of the study were, of course, in full accord with the expectations of members of the school staff, previous reports having shown that the college records of Weston High School graduates were very good.

Besides establishing community confidence in the high school, the inquiry brought to light one of the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the instructional program and contributed greatly to the improvement of parent-school-community relationships.

*The Improvement of Business Education in Wilmington.* During the past thirty years, business education in the Wilmington, Delaware high schools has grown from a program that provided instruction for a mere handful of students to a program that now provides instruction for close to 50 per cent of the members of the secondary schools.<sup>13</sup> This growth has been due primarily to two factors: (a) the phenomenal development of business and industry in the Wilmington area and (b) the beginning of a two-week alternate co-operative work-experience program in Wilmington public schools in 1926. The co-operative office-training program provided that all business-education students spend two weeks in school and two weeks in an approved business office on an alternating basis during the Senior year.

Along with the problem of securing an adequate number of approved outside training agencies has been the insistent demand on the part of business that schools provide better-trained workers for office occupations. At the annual education-night dinner meeting of the Wilmington chapter of the National Office Management Association in February, 1949, to which all business-education teachers and school administrators had been invited, businessmen openly charged the Wilmington public schools with turning out inadequately prepared students.

At the next education-night dinner, February, 1950, the Wilmington chapter of the National Office Management Association presented a "15-Point Program for the Improvement of Business Education" to the same group of teachers, school administrators, and businessmen. Considerable progress has been made since that time, including a general revision of the curriculum pattern, changes in techniques of co-ordination of the co-operative program, and the securing of additional equipment and classroom space.

As an outgrowth of the in-service training program held in 1949-50, teachers were divided into small groups to study specific prob-

13. Report prepared by Harry Q. Packer, Supervisor, Department of Business Education.

lems that were brought to light during the in-service training program. As these problems were considered, it became evident that it would be impossible to make sound recommendations because of the lack of specific information concerning occupational needs of the co-operating business concerns. The Advisory Committee for Co-operative Office Training, as well as the Educational Committee of the Wilmington chapter of the National Office Management Association, helped to prepare the initial recommendations to the Board of Education for additional staff, classroom space, and office equipment. However, it became evident to both educators and businessmen that a survey must be made to secure accurate occupational information in order to meet the needs of the community most effectively and to facilitate the placement of students in the co-operative office-training program.

A committee was appointed by the business-education department to study this problem and to prepare an appropriate survey questionnaire.

Several techniques for conducting the survey were explored. The committee decided that the best technique would be to mail the questionnaires to the business firms which had participated in the co-operative office-training program of the Wilmington public schools during the past three years and to the members of the Wilmington chapter of the National Office Management Association. Further, the committee recommended that the survey be conducted as a joint undertaking of the Wilmington chapter of the National Office Management Association and the Wilmington public schools.

Various groups co-operated in the project and in following through on the questionnaires, with the result that replies were received from 84.2 per cent of the inquiries. Analysis of findings of the survey has provided valuable guideposts for the further development of the business-education program.

Thus, the citizens advisory committees co-operatively worked with the schools to secure accurate occupational information concerning business firms in the community and to facilitate the training and placement of students in the co-operative work-experience program. As a result of this study, it was possible to improve the effectiveness of the entire business-education curriculum in many ways. This partnership between school and community not only

provided a democratic way of developing a functional program in business education but also provided an interpretive technique for securing community support. Policies and programs developed through citizen co-operation are usually supported by the community because of a better understanding of mutual problems.

*Resource-Use Education in Exeter.* The agricultural community of Exeter, located in southern Alabama, covers approximately 120 square miles.<sup>14</sup> The soil is chiefly sandy loam. There are 240 farms in the area, 40 per cent of which are occupied by tenants. The chief cash crops are cotton, peanuts, corn, hogs, cattle, and timber. Most of the people are third- and fourth-generation Americans and were born and reared in this community.

The seventeen-teacher school consists of Grades I to XII, with an enrolment averaging 430 students each year. Five school buses, driven by students, transport 90 per cent of these children. The lunchroom serves about three hundred students daily. The school operates a canning plant and a creosote post-treating plant on the campus for instructional purposes and for use by families of the community.

The Parent-Teacher Association is quite active, members coming from all sections of the attendance area. Since this is one of the few opportunities the people have to get together, attendance averages more than two hundred at each meeting. It affords an excellent opportunity for interpreting the school program to the community.

The school became interested in resource-use education in 1947, through the leadership of the superintendent, the supervisor, and a consultant from the state university. Several of the teachers attributed their interest in a more functional program to the reading of *Education for All American Youth*.<sup>15</sup> The planning committee for faculty meetings selected "ways of using resources" as the subject for one year's program. The entire faculty made a trip to the nearest government experiment station to learn soil conservation through the use of cover crops. The teachers learned how to set pines so they could teach the children.

14. Report prepared by Frank N. Philpot, Supervisor of Instruction, Department of Education, State of Alabama.

15. *Education for All American Youth: A Further Look*. Washington: Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association, 1952 (revised edition).



Several teachers arranged for extension courses in art and science and asked that these subjects be taught with reference to resource-use education. At the parent-teacher association meeting the entire community was invited to take part and several programs were developed explaining the different areas of resource-use. The school took the lead in promoting a community-wide survey with particular emphasis on health conditions. Teachers considered one of the most helpful things they did was making scrapbooks of materials for each area of resource-use they studied, this being one way in which they could share their ideas with other faculty members and with new teachers who entered the school.

The teachers worked with the local Department of Public Health, the Forestry Service, the Soil Conservation Service, and the 4-H Club leaders to interest people in the study of resource-use. A program of home visitations was encouraged and some of the teachers were able to visit all the homes represented in their homerooms. They tried to determine what were the most pressing needs as they visited each home.

The county film library was enlarged to more than two hundred films that deal with resource-use education. From the school catalogues of free and inexpensive films many others were ordered and used. Teachers planned activities on the various grade levels designed to give students experience in the study and solution of resource-use problems.

The students made a food survey by keeping a record of foods eaten for three days and tabulating the records. Each homeroom then planned the cafeteria meals for a week. The entire school worked on the problem of including the seven basic foods in the diet. Although the food survey was conducted primarily to determine the nutritional needs of the children, it taught valuable lessons in co-operation, truthfulness, accuracy, and dependability.

In studying soils and forestry, several classes went to visit the nearest experiment station and a near-by state park. Problems and solutions for soil and forest conservation were pointed out and discussed. Each experience gained from the various activities on resource-use was so designed that it could be applied to broader fields of knowledge. The faculty decided to place all possible emphasis upon character education and to give students opportunities for lead-

ership and responsibility wherever possible. They believed that the environment of the entire school should be that of an instructional laboratory.

One class was studying "The Wise Use of Leisure Time" and decided to survey the opportunities for worth-while recreation in the community. This led the Senior class to take the initiative in establishing a recreational center for the high-school students. Some games were donated by local citizens and others were purchased. At least two Seniors, a teacher, and a parent were present each time the center was open on Friday and Saturday nights and Saturday afternoons.

The Seniors were so successful with the recreation center that they decided to sponsor a health center in town. The county nurse agreed to spend one afternoon per week in the center. The class painted and redecorated a room to be used and chose a committee to be responsible for cleaning the health center each Monday afternoon. The class members assisted the nurse by weighing, measuring, testing eyes, completing records, and whatever clerical work was assigned to them.

The students recognized the need for a student council, so several groups of students visited schools having active councils. As a result plans were completed for the beginning of student government.

Community leaders and agencies have been used in the Exeter school as classroom resources for the instructional program. The community served as a laboratory for instruction through the survey of general health conditions and another survey of general economic and social conditions. Field trips were made to study stream life, to obtain knowledge for setting up an aquarium, to study soil and forestry, and to learn about the planting of legumes, various phases of farming, and beautifying homes.

The following are some ways in which students have been given concrete learning experiences: treating farm animals for disease prevention and treating some diseases; establishing home orchards; selling ads for the school paper and the annual; culling poultry; judging farm animals; running terrace lines; interviewing people who employ others in various occupations to learn the job requirements in these fields; organizing and managing a recreational center; planting pine trees; landscaping yards of homes in the community; typing

contracts and miscellaneous reports; performing secretarial duties for business people; working in the canning plant and the post-treating plant; working in the preschool clinic and health center; and conducting two community surveys.

Some of the ways in which the instructional program has helped to meet the needs of the community are: increasing community income by adding soy beans as a cash crop, planting hybrid corn, improving production of hogs, running thirty thousand feet of terrace lines each year, improving soil conservation practices, building and operating post-treating plant; increasing community health by establishing health center, setting out three hundred fruit trees, planting several thousand pine trees, preserving eight thousand cans of farm produce per year in the school canning plant, conducting health surveys and reporting the results to parents; increasing social life by establishing recreational centers where class, club, and community parties are held and where parent-teacher association meetings are scheduled so as to provide for a recreation period at the end of each program.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS OF VARIOUS KINDS OF PROJECTS

In addition to the illustrations of citizen co-operation just described, many others were reported by elementary and secondary schools. Several of these have been grouped under appropriate headings and will be referred to briefly in the following paragraphs.

*Parents Participate in School Activities.* A large number of schools invite parents to take a direct part in their activities. They go on field trips with pupils and teachers, share in planning bazaars, exhibits, and special holiday observances. Many help with school assembly programs by providing entertainment, making costumes, coaching dramatic productions, supervising the construction of scenery, and helping pupils backstage during the programs. They also put on musicals in which they share honors with their children.

Community officials frequently teach classes in safety, fire prevention, and public health, while parents with special talents take over classes once a week in storytelling, craftwork, art, music, book reviews, and creative writing. Some assist with problems arising at lunch time and try to meet them by preparing and serving food and supervising recreation.

The parent-teacher association has an active part in improving school programs. In one community, the association receives all new parents, welcomes them to the school, and distributes informational booklets on school policies. In another situation, a committee of mothers works in the school library. They repair books, help to select new ones, set up reading programs for adults, check out books to pupils and parents, and the like. Fund-raising is an activity that the parent-teacher association has accepted rather widely. Often they operate a nursery on days when their meetings are held so that all parents with small children may attend; they even assist with the registration of kindergarten children at the beginning of the year.

A technique that has proved to be most valuable in securing and increasing parent participation in school life is the device known as the talent sheet. Developed by teachers and parents, it lists many different ways in which mothers and fathers can help the school. Items on the sheet cover such things as playing a musical instrument, directing a photography club, assisting with clerical work, and coaching a play. The talent sheet is sent to the home of each pupil with a letter requesting parents to check their special talents and to indicate whether they would be willing to use them in the school.

Most secondary schools report that career conferences are held at least once a year in co-operation with business and industrial leaders. Sometimes the conferences are financed exclusively by outside groups, but generally the school assumes the financial obligations and leaves a large share of the responsibility for securing competent speakers in the hands of the lay group. Career conferences are supplemented in many places by annual tours to industrial plants and business firms in which graduates will seek employment. Usually, the details of these tours are divided between school officials and outsiders, with the business groups underwriting the entire cost.

*Special Services for the Community.* Special services for the community are another means being used to promote friendly relations and to develop an appreciation of the school. Planned sometimes by school people alone, they are generally the result of co-operative work by pupils, teachers, and interested community members. In one district, a Sunday music hour is held in the school auditorium to which the public is invited without charge. Some schools make their visual-aid equipment available to civic groups and supply

student operators when the time is not in conflict with the regular school day. A few schools report the formation of neighborhood councils consisting of teachers and parents who work with theater managers in selecting and evaluating motion pictures that are shown on Saturday. In some communities an a cappella choir and orchestra, made up of high-school students and adults, give concerts regularly for the pleasure of townspeople, while several schools and community organizations conduct clean-street and home-beautification campaigns.

*Ways of Improving Citizenship.* Schools list many ways that parents, teachers, and pupils work together to improve citizenship. They report that special meetings are held to explain local government at which public officials speak and parents and pupils raise many questions of mutual interest. Examples are cited of courses in family life, childhood education, and mental hygiene, organized at the request of parents. One senior high school holds a series of forums in order to increase pupil and parent understanding of the community and brings in outstanding citizens to share their knowledge and views with the group. Special efforts are made in some communities to improve race relations and in others to help pupils and citizens detect subversive propaganda and to learn how to combat it.

Several schools stress the need for citizens going to the polls and encourage pupils to write notes to their parents reminding them of their duty. Local judges are asked to administer the oath to new office-holders in the student council as a means of stressing the importance of the responsibility pupils have assumed. A "fiesta of nations" is put on in an elementary school by pupils and their parents, at which time booths are set up for displaying objects and pictures of the nations represented. In another elementary school, all youngsters in Grades III-VI undertake a study of their community. They usually select something that appeals to them and then investigate it. This work takes the children into the community and brings many citizens into the school, particularly when reports are made and discussions held, with pupils and citizens exchanging ideas. The history of the local community is another type of project that has commanded rather wide appeal and has resulted in the publication of interesting booklets to which citizens have contributed.

A different approach was reported by a school official who stated that parents, teachers, and pupils voluntarily *undertook* a courtesy campaign. All special acts of courtesy on the part of pupils inside and outside of the school were reported to a central committee. This committee not only sent a letter of commendation to deserving pupils but also sent one to the school they attended. Much effort has gone into developing constructive activities as a means of reducing vandalism at Halloween through the combined work of principals, teachers, and local merchants. Window-painting contests with prizes is one means used for the purpose, while community parades and parties between seven and nine in the evening are others enjoying popularity. All schools engaged in these activities state that the results have been excellent.

*Increasing Citizen Understanding of Schools.* Several projects have been undertaken to increase citizen understanding of the school program. One project reported is a two-day conference at which a list of questions is taken up that parents want answered. This conference is followed by discussions in the homes of participants who would like to pursue certain questions more intensively. Teachers serve as resource persons at these small discussion groups. Panel and forum discussions are used to furnish information and to eliminate any misunderstandings parents and other citizens have regarding modern educational practices. Often pupils take part in these meetings along with teachers and members of the community. There is evidence that school-made motion pictures, which show a cross section of the educational program, are doing a great deal to enlighten taxpayers on what their money buys. A number of these films are planned by teachers and parents, and the technical details are handled by specialists drawn from the community. A similar result is being produced by talks and programs presented by teachers and pupils before civic groups in several communities. Home-room meetings enjoy wide acceptance in individual schools as a medium through which frank discussion may take place between parents and teachers. Seniors in one high school prepared a public relations pamphlet with the aid of three advertising men who felt that business people should know more about the distributive-education program.

*Practices Related to Pupil Welfare and Progress.* Parents and teachers have worked together to protect and improve pupil welfare and progress. Most common among the projects reported are those dealing with health and safety. In co-operation with community organizations, and particularly luncheon clubs, they have helped needy youngsters to obtain lunches, glasses, medical aid, dental work, and scholarships to institutions of higher learning. Many surveys have been made of immunization practices, fire and accident hazards, and the condition of bicycles pupils ride to school. They have worked with local police on safety campaigns and have sponsored the formation of safety councils for the study and elimination of dangerous traffic conditions. Any number of pupil safety patrols have been organized and part-time policemen assigned to busy thoroughfares to protect pupils going to and from school. One such council even produced a motion picture that illustrated conditions which might result in serious accidents on the street, playground, and in the home. A principal reports that parents who have had first-aid training relieve the school nurse when she must go on home visits, while another principal recounts the services performed by a committee of parents who go to the homes of sick children to see how they may help.

Pupil progress is something else that has brought parents into co-operative relations with teachers and school officials. Jointly, they hold discussions, establish committees, and take definite action regarding attendance regulations, homework, report cards, discipline, and methods of evaluating achievement in school work. Several senior high schools schedule regular meetings for the purpose of familiarizing parents with college admission requirements and courses of study that are offered by various institutions.

*Improving the School Plant and Facilities.* The school plant and its facilities represent a major area of co-operative work in the improvement of individual school programs. Reports disclose that new buildings and the remodeling of existing structures depended in several instances upon the co-operative study and untiring efforts of lay-professional committees. Examples are given of how committees raised funds for playground equipment, electric scoreboards and loud-speaker systems for gymnasiums and auditoriums, purchased athletic equipment and musical instruments, as well as

band uniforms, library books, and equipment for the school lunch-room. In one southern community a fair association turns over the money it makes for the improvement of the school plant and has done so for several years, while in a northeastern community a citizen group took over the task of converting a barn, located behind the high school, into a music center which is now used for regular instruction during the day and for adult musical activities in the evening. In a midwestern community the planning of a new vocational high school was undertaken by a committee of teachers and community leaders after a survey of public opinion concerning the need for the school.

*Attention to Recreation.* Child, youth, and adult recreation has been given much attention by school and community groups. Illustrations are rather numerous of summer programs being sponsored for young children by parents and teachers, with the board of education providing the necessary funds for supervisors and equipment. Several reports contained accounts of how citizens committees organized after-school and week-end recreational opportunities, such as dancing classes, hobby clubs, sports programs, and bird hikes. Examples were also given of parents and children building an out-of-door skating rink, clearing a wooded lot near the school for nature study, and making visits to places of interest in the community. Some parent-teacher associations undertook special programs for children, including professional entertainments on Saturday afternoons, pet shows, choral and instrumental practice, and concerts in which both parents and children took part.

Similar activities have been organized for the recreation of high-school youth. More pointed, however, has been the development of behavior codes for teen-agers on questions of hours, parties, social conduct, spending allowances, and matters of clothing. Some schools report that the parent-teacher association has held open meetings at which views have been exchanged by parents, teachers, and young people on boy-girl relations and problems of mutual concern. Teen-age centers or clubs have been established with the assistance of civic groups where dances are held and various types of recreational activities provided. Responsibility for financing the centers has often been assumed by parents or by community organizations and, in some cases, the money has been raised by the



young people themselves. Parents serve as chaperons, though the supervision of the clubs is often divided between teachers and student leaders. As a rule, programs are planned by a joint committee of parents, teachers, and pupils, and occasionally by the parent-teacher association alone.

Schools also report that "open house" recreational centers have been organized for the young and the old alike. Held generally every Friday evening, the program consists of dancing, games, clay-modeling, jewelry-making, carpentry, amateur-night performances, movies, exhibitions, and contests. This idea of a community center has been carried over into the development of summer recreational programs where youth and adults may come together and enjoy a wide variety of activities, some being intended for leisure and others for self-improvement and vocational preparation. In communities where programs are held either during the school year or in summer, the planning has been done by educators working co-operatively with representatives of the community.

*Helping To Develop the Curriculum.* Perhaps the most important work done co-operatively to improve individual school programs is that relating to the curriculum. This work appears to be of three different types.

The first is an attempt to develop a two-way understanding of what schools are trying to accomplish and what citizens would like schools to do. A common expression of this is found in the advisory curriculum committee made up of educators and parents. As the principal of one school pointed out in his report, the curriculum committee was appointed as a means for getting at public opinion and for submitting proposed changes to citizens for their reactions. He expressed the hope, however, that the committee would accept definite assignments after a time and work on curriculum reorganization.

In another school a committee of teachers and parents is reported as having developed an extensive project for the purpose of determining what basic information should be gathered before anything was done on curriculum development. Included among the topics considered by the committee were the nature of the learning process, individual differences in the capacity of pupils to learn, cultural factors, family problems, and intergroup relations. In a

southern community, the question came up at a staff meeting as to whether the high school was teaching what parents wanted for their sons and daughters. Because of difficulty in trying to answer the question, staff members suggested that parents be brought into subsequent meetings. Although this was done, it was soon realized that the thinking of more parents was needed before definite conclusions could be drawn. A questionnaire was then developed by parents and teachers. It was administered to teachers, students, and their parents. The findings indicated that the groups represented various opinions as to what the high school should teach. However, the results opened the way for study of the entire high-school curriculum on a co-operative basis.

Several reports contained accounts of how co-operative committees were exploring present offerings and deciding whether changes should be made in the program of studies. More reference was made to the fields of vocational and business education than to any others. Several schools started work along this line as a result of evaluations conducted by accrediting associations. They pointed out that the evaluation reports served as a ready means for bringing community leaders into the curriculum program and asking them to assist in the follow-up study of problems suggested by the reports. Attacks on schools in recent years have also been responsible for initiating joint inquiries into the teaching of such things as moral and spiritual values, reading habits of pupils, methods of teaching beginning reading and related skill subjects, the purposes of education, discipline, and social conduct.

A second type of curriculum work has been the revising of old courses and the building of new ones. As one school reported, a committee of five competent parents shared with teachers the responsibility for bringing an entire program in homemaking up to date and making it more functional. A vocational council, consisting of teachers and representatives from industry, planned a series of vocational courses and allocated specialized fields to different schools in the area. This was done because no one school was large enough to support the whole program, though a comprehensive program was needed. Students wishing to specialize in a particular trade went to the school for a half day which offered the required courses and then spent the other half day in their own

schools. Similar committees are reported as having developed co-operative work-study programs through which pupils divide their time between supervised work experience and classroom instruction. Several driver-training courses have been organized with the assistance of automobile clubs and automobile dealers who sometimes supply the cars used for teaching the students to drive.

Much co-operative work has gone into the development of civilian defense in recent years and into the construction of courses in first aid. Two secondary schools reported that they had worked out courses in practical nursing with the help of medical and hospital people. Vocational agriculture, auto mechanics, airplane-engine maintenance, and even a course in fashion design have found their way into the curriculum through the joint efforts of teachers and laymen. Other reports show that courses in health and safety, arithmetic, practical mathematics, business English, child care, leisure reading, and the like, have been organized in this way.

Perhaps one of the more unique contributions to the secondary-school curriculum took place through a program known as the "School-and-School Exchange Plan." This plan, started by the principal and furthered with the assistance of the Red Cross, parents, and civic groups, was built on the idea that students should gain experience outside of their own community. A selected group of Juniors and Seniors are exchanged each year for a week with a corresponding number of students from a high school in another section of the country. They live in each other's homes and attend each others schools during the exchange period. Thorough preparation on the region they will visit is made in advance of the exchange. Projects of various types are undertaken for raising money to cover expenses. Significant experiences gained from the exchange are shared with the entire student body.

The third type of curriculum work is related to the selection of instructional materials. One co-operating group studied with teachers the problems created by television as well as the uses to which television programs could be put in school and at home. Executives of a large department store agreed to meet on Saturday mornings with two boys and two girls each month for the discussion of retailing practices carried on in the store. A number of merchants took time regularly to visit classes in distributive educa-

tion and to teach students how to set up show case and window displays. They gave some display materials and props to the school or loaned others for short periods of time. Interested businessmen are reported to have encouraged students to visit their places of business, to have supplied trade journals, and to have given other instructional aids to teachers. The selection of classroom films, library books and textbooks, and supplementary reading and visual materials has been done co-operatively with community representatives in many schools.

### *An Analysis of Co-operative Enterprises*

Several questions were raised in analyzing co-operative projects to find out what patterns of action were followed and what results there were which contributed to the improvement of individual school programs. These questions were: (a) Why was the project undertaken and who was responsible for starting it? (b) How were members of the co-operating groups selected and what procedures did they follow? (c) What results were obtained? (d) What difficulties were experienced? and (e) What possibilities were suggested for the further development of school and community co-operation?

#### THE INITIATION OF PROJECTS

Several reasons were given for initiating co-operative projects. A primary one was that of trying to interest citizens and taxpayers more directly in the program and problems of the individual school. It was felt that, through their contacts with school activities and their participation in some of them, better understanding could be developed along with stronger bonds of friendship and support. Accordingly, opportunities were created for parents and patrons to go on field trips with children, to take part in assembly, dramatic, and musical productions, to engage in discussions through homeroom councils, forums, and the like. The real motive, however, in some instances was to neutralize adverse criticism of the instructional program and to prevent future difficulties.

A second reason for this emphasis on co-operation grew out of a conviction on the part of educational leaders that the school must make its program more responsive to the wishes of the people and to the needs of the community. This conviction often resulted in

the advisory committee or council arrangement whereby administrators and teachers planned systematically for meetings with citizen groups to discuss the school program and what should be done to improve it. Several schools had councils of parents who represented the interests of the immediate neighborhood and were usually connected with the parent-teacher association. Others had councils of highly competent individuals drawn from the community at large whose practical advice was used as a guide in revising the course content, materials, and methods of instruction in special fields. The board of one large school system had appointed an advisory council or committee for each school in the system.

A number of schools reported that members of their advisory councils worked with teachers in curriculum laboratories and that they had a definite part in making worth-while changes in the program of studies. In cases where no advisory council had been organized, parents and competent laymen were invited to serve on curriculum committees and to share responsibility for effecting desirable changes in the program of studies. Examples were given in the fields of business and industrial education, in arithmetic, social studies, home economics, and extracurriculum activities.

A few schools were motivated to undertake co-operative projects for other reasons, one being to increase placement opportunities of high-school graduates by working on training programs that would meet the specifications of prospective employers. Another originated with parents over their concern for the social conduct and behavior of teen-age children. Administrators, teachers, and pupils helped with many of these projects. Forums, panels, and discussion groups were held to get at the underlying causes, and attempts were made to solve problems by drawing up codes of conduct, establishing teen-age canteens, and increasing recreational opportunities for after-school hours, week ends, and during the summer vacation. Lastly, some educational leaders sought to carry out the philosophy that the school should serve as a community center. They were instrumental in starting co-operative enterprises out of which recreational and informal adult-education programs developed, loans of visual equipment were made to community groups, special libraries set up for parents, Sunday musical concerts given, and community orchestras and choirs formed for youth and adults alike.

It seems that the projects were started most frequently by principals and teachers. However, the parent-teacher association, sometimes alone and sometimes at the suggestion of school people, played a prominent role in starting constructive projects, especially in the elementary school. Business and industrial executives showed leadership in starting work on vocational-training programs and in encouraging secondary schools to hold career-day conferences and to take tours of local industries. The number of reported projects initiated by the civic groups and organizations was relatively small.

#### PERSONNEL AND PROCEDURE

The selection of pupils, parents, teachers, administrators, and other citizens for work on co-operative projects varied considerably according to the nature of the project and the group responsible for initiating it. As shown by the reports, some committee members were appointed exclusively by the board of education or by the chief school administrative officer under instructions from the board of education. This was the case in several smaller school systems having advisory committees or councils and in larger ones where such committees existed to help plan the program in special fields of instruction. An interesting departure occurred in a community when the board of education created three or four special advisory committees, then threw the membership open to anyone who wished to serve on them. Occasionally, the appointments of the school board were based upon recommendations made either by the principal, the principal and the school staff, or the school staff and the student body. Where these procedures were not followed, the board of education selected community leaders as committee members, and the principal or the staff selected members to represent the school staff.

The reports disclosed further that in many situations the individual principal exercised a strong influence on the determination of personnel for co-operative projects. He was responsible for selecting the members of study-action groups in several communities, including laymen as well as faculty representatives and pupils. Unless the appointments were made directly by him, he followed the suggestions of the staff alone, of the staff and the

student body, or of the parent-teacher association. An exception was found where he appointed the staff members and asked the student council to name representatives from their own group and from the parents of the community.

The selection of committee members sometimes followed an invitational pattern, with the principal asking outside organizations to appoint their own representatives. Frequently he specified the number wanted. If the invitation was not presented by him, then it came from either the faculty or the faculty and students. This method was applied more frequently to projects involving a large number of people. Other variations in selection procedures included appointments by the principal and appointments by outside groups, appointments by outside groups and appointments by the faculty, and elections from a panel of names by a vote of the faculty.

Most project groups were organized rather simply for the work they had to do. If the project was large and required the assistance of several people over a long period of time, a central planning committee directed the work and assigned special phases of it to subcommittees; otherwise, it remained in the hands of a single group. The extent to which subcommittees were needed usually depended upon the preliminary work that was done in determining the nature and scope of the project. Some planning committees took a year or more to gather information for this purpose before they defined the limits of the project and were able to decide how the work should be delegated.

Many different techniques were employed in carrying projects to their ultimate conclusion. Among those used as means for obtaining basic information were questionnaires, hearings, interviews, field trips, consultations with specialists, examinations of pertinent literature, public discussions in the form of panels and forums, search of school records, and informal discussions. Where it was felt that the public should be kept informed of the work being done by the committee, such media of communication as newspaper articles, brochures, reports to parents, articles in the school newspaper, speakers, slides, exhibits, and motion pictures were brought into play. Final action was often expressed through a well-prepared set of recommendations which the superintendent transmitted to the board of education, although some projects were concerned with

problems that called for final decisions by an outside group or a governmental agency. Generally, project committees were empowered to act upon their own findings and conclusions and to co-operate with the principal in effecting improvements that did not require administrative approval or changes in board policy.

#### THE OUTCOMES

The list of successful outcomes from citizen co-operation is long and impressive. Besides the gains made directly from projects, many significant by-products resulted. In some situations, the by-products are just as important as the project achievements and must be included in any consideration of how individual school programs were improved. A high percentage of the schools report that they now enjoy better relations with the community and with the parent group than they have ever known before. They tell of wholesome changes in parent attitudes and of increased communication between the home and school. They generally report that criticisms of the educational program have decreased and cite examples of a minimizing of potential attacks on the schools as a result of a growing confidence and support by the public.

Strong emphases are placed upon improvements made in the instructional program through citizen co-operation. The active participation of parents in school activities, such as musicals, field trips, and vocational counseling, helped to bring about a deeper understanding of education and a stronger sense of unity that paved the way for changes which otherwise might not have taken place. Community leaders who served in a consulting capacity or who worked with teachers on curriculum problems helped them not only to interpret the needs and desires of the community but also to make significant changes in course outlines, methods of teaching, and instructional materials.

A number of reports contained specific information on improvements in the school plant resulting from co-operative projects. New buildings were constructed because citizens got behind bond issues or increases in millage rates, old structures were remodeled and extensions built, equipment purchased, and related changes made which contributed to the value of the educational program and to the social and recreational enjoyment of citizens in the com-



munity. A number of reports contained statements to the effect that members of school-plant committees were able to realize objectives which exceeded the most optimistic outlook of school administrators and teachers and that the public was willing to spend money on any plant improvement which made sense and was obviously in the interest of children.

Beyond these major achievements, other gains included improvements in community life, increased teacher and pupil participation in community affairs, better placement of high-school graduates in employment, faculty understanding of the school as a whole, growth in faculty-pupil leadership, better ways of working with pupils and parents on school problems, more services from the school to the community and from the community to the school, and the improvement of social conduct and behavior on the part of teenage youngsters.

#### DIFFICULTIES AND LIMITATIONS

Difficulties and limitations were experienced in connection with several individual school projects. The reports suggest that some of the difficulties were peculiar to local situations and that some were due to lack of skill in working with groups.

Reference was made to questions that arose over the time, place, and frequency of meetings. Occasionally, disagreements were expressed about the size of the project committee. One principal pointed out the need for having a central group to pull loose ends together and to act as a clearinghouse for information when several project committees were functioning. Some committee members complained that too much attention was given to matters of organization and not enough to procedures for doing the job. On the other hand, the comment was made that not enough thought was given to organization because too many wanted to take action before thinking through the problem they had been asked to consider.

Attitudes constituted a serious limitation that ran through a number of reports. For one thing, too many citizens accepted project assignments fully expecting that the work would be done by school people. They were willing to discuss purposes and values and to share in the formulation of plans but not to gather facts, undertake investigations, or work for the implementation of their own recom-

mendations. Some found it hard to realize that pupils have a place in a co-operative enterprise that calls for the ability to make sound decisions.

Teachers were sometimes unwilling to serve on project committees because of the heavy teaching schedules under which they were working. Some of them hesitated to accept co-operative project responsibilities because they felt insecure and were unwilling to make errors that might lower their status in the community. In some situations teachers were doubtful whether much would grow out of co-operative undertakings since the board of education and the superintendent had failed to give encouragement to the plan of sharing responsibility with members of the community.

A major difficulty appeared to be the absence of capable leadership of the type needed for co-operative projects. It stands to reason that democratic leadership will not develop among members of a group unless community leaders and those who represent the school are able to work together harmoniously. Evidence of poor leadership was disclosed through comments relating to inefficient methods of working, inability of committee members to stay on the subject, action without thoughtful consideration of the facts, uncertainty regarding the true purposes of a project, waste of time with nonessential formalities, and complaints that responsibilities were not divided equitably among members of the group.

Another limitation pertains to citizen opinion and understanding of projects. One principal made the point that teachers who were members of the project committee in his school did not have the opportunity to discuss the proposed plans with people in the community, nor did the committee accept the suggestion that the project ought to be reviewed by more parents and taxpayers before decisions were made. However, another principal indicated that it was difficult to bring laymen into the deliberations of the project committee and still retain the value of a small, compact working group. He recommended that information about the plans of the committee be kept before the public so that people could have a chance to express their views.

## FURTHER POSSIBILITIES

Further possibilities for the development of citizen co-operation in the improvement of individual school programs are suggested by the practices reported in this chapter. They indicate that, as staff members and pupils in elementary and secondary schools learn to work co-operatively, they acquire skills in human relations which are essential to the successful sharing of responsibilities and to the solving of educational problems with the assistance of parents and citizens. The reports indicate further that this capacity for effective participation in group activity cannot be acquired within a short period of time and cannot be used to good purpose without the adoption of appropriate policies and the acceptance of principles which properly guide the functioning of co-operative procedures.

Abundant evidence is supplied in the reports that people are interested in schools. Once they understand educational needs and conditions and gain an appreciation of what administrators and teachers are trying to do, they are usually willing to give generously of their time, energy, patience, and money to accomplish worthy ends. Not infrequently, they are more progressive in their thinking than administrators or teachers and have less difficulty in securing public support for the proposals they recommend. Actually, the potential for school improvement through citizen co-operation has scarcely been recognized.

Another possibility pertains to the place of co-operative relations in the improvement of the school community. It is well known that environmental conditions outside of the school play a strong part in shaping the growth and development of children and youth. Because the task of changing these conditions is too large for any one institution to handle by itself, the school must join forces with other institutions and agencies having an educative function to perform. As shown in some of the illustrations, the school can provide the leadership needed for interesting others in the welfare of the community and for initiating co-operative action to bring about conditions that are favorable to growth and development.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Local School Systems Benefit by Citizen Co-operation*

ALDEN H. BLANKENSHIP

Two preceding chapters have directed attention to important aspects of citizen co-operation at the classroom and the individual school levels, respectively. In this chapter, the center of interest is the local school system, which may include several schools and a large number of classrooms. The major problems seem to be to discover the most productive areas for co-operation and to learn the most effective ways of working together.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Possibilities Inherent in School Systems*

Many school problems are necessarily system-wide in nature. The school board is elected by the people of the entire school system to serve all the schools. The board selects personnel, adopts the budget, authorizes the construction of the buildings, provides for transportation—in fact, is responsible for all system-wide policies which determine the kind of program likely to be found in the classrooms.

Most citizens of any community are interested in what is taking place in the school system as a whole, as well as in what is happening in the particular school their children attend. If unsatisfactory teaching, inadequate supplies, poor housing, or other undesirable conditions exist in any school, some of the responsibility may rest with the school itself, but the basis of the difficulty is likely to be system-wide. That is, problems of policy must be resolved for the entire system, although a start may be made in a classroom or school.

Many kinds of community-wide co-operation are needed in a local school system. First of all, the relations between the superin-

1. The author of this chapter desires to express his appreciation of the co-operation of the many persons who submitted materials for use in the preparation of this chapter.

tendent and the board of education should be carefully studied because unsatisfactory working relations at this level may handicap the entire program. Individual teacher-citizen relations are also important because they play a large part in determining the reactions of the community to the school staff. If school personnel tend to seek friends only in their own professional group, or if they give the impression that they resent suggestions from "outsiders," the public is likely to be critical as well as unco-operative.

Not only are there parent-teacher associations for individual schools but usually there is also a system-wide council to deal with those problems of the entire school system which are of interest to that organization. In many systems there are citizens committees which are concerned with various phases of the program, and in quite a few there are now system-wide citizens committees of one kind or another.

### *Activities Relating to Board Responsibilities and Policies*

Boards of education are the major structural link between the people of the school district and the professional management of the schools. Boards should, therefore, be particularly concerned about policies and procedures involving relations with the public. It is important that the board and its staff keep in touch with the people and keep them informed about what is happening in the individual schools and in the school system. However, the board cannot abdicate its legal responsibilities or permit any of its prerogatives to be taken over by other persons.

The board should have a policy of encouraging citizen co-operation in the study of problems as a basis for developing policies for the school system. How to implement such a policy is, however, a matter which puzzles many superintendents and school boards. The present chapter considers some of the major areas of school board responsibility and gives illustrations of co-operative activities which school boards may properly sponsor.

### SCHOOL SYSTEM POLICIES

The school board is responsible to the state for meeting certain minimum standards and to the people in the community for the

development of policies by which to regulate the management of the local school system. Since the people are the stockholders in the schools, they should be invited to participate in discussions dealing with the basic policies on which the affairs of the school system are conducted.<sup>2</sup> In some school systems, even the members of the staff have had little part to play in developing policies. In other systems, however, staff members and representative citizens have worked together in making studies and preparing recommendations regarding basic policies.

The maintenance of morale and good working relationships of the entire staff of the school system requires suitable policies with reference to qualifications and conditions for employment, types of position, salary schedules, leaves of absence, and other personnel matters. To insure effective teamwork and fair treatment of all, it is desirable to develop the policies relating to these problems on a school system basis. There are many opportunities for co-operation in this area. For the purpose of studying such personnel problems, school systems frequently set up special committees composed of one or more board members, some certificated or noncertificated school employees, members of the administrative or supervisory staff, and community representatives. The results of these studies, with accompanying suggestions for policies, are then made available to the school board for their study and action.

An excellent illustration is provided by Bloomfield, New Jersey, where the first citizen-staff committee was organized in 1943. This committee studied the salary situation and developed a salary guide, which was accepted by the school board without change. In Darien, Connecticut, where committees have been largely made up of board members, the superintendent, and professional staff members, plans were developed for the in-service education of teachers, which resulted in a revised policy.

An interesting example of citizen co-operation which resulted in improving administrative policies is reported from Fairfield, Connecticut. The administration committee of the Citizens School Study Council has proposed several policy changes as a result of its analysis of school procedures with respect to business efficiency,

2. "Board Rules and Regulations," *Central Ideas*, IV (October, 1951). New York 27: Central School Boards Committee for Educational Research (525 W. 120th St.).

the supervision of professional and nonprofessional personnel, office methods, insurance, the superintendent's office, and transportation.

The local teachers association of the Mount Diablo Unified School District at Concord, California, adopted the plan of inviting board members to their conferences and workshops in order to help both groups of participants through the exchange of ideas and improved understandings of each other's ideas. Some of the topics considered in these conferences have a direct bearing on school board policies. These include such topics as salaries, retirement, finance, legislation, professional standards, and public relations.

The whole area of public relations seems to require a system-wide organizational pattern and direction. Citizen participation in the study of problems in this area can very effectively aid the board of education in its search for satisfactory answers to these problems.

#### BUDGETS

The annual budget of the school system outlines the financial plans for transforming the policies and objectives of the school system into a meaningful educational program. The school board has the legal responsibility for the preparation and adoption of this annual budget in keeping with sound educational, business, and budgetary practices. Since the taxpayers in the community and the state actually foot the bill, it is important that they know what their money buys. Thus, excellent opportunities for community co-operation are offered in developing the school system budget.

In actual practice, the superintendent, with the assistance of the staff, collects the facts and prepares the preliminary estimates in line with board policies for the study and consideration of the board. Materials regarding each individual school and each of the various services are a necessary part of this comprehensive preliminary study. Citizens groups can make important contributions and develop a better understanding of the factors involved in school financing if they share in this preliminary planning.

Graphic presentation of needs, ability to pay, and present financial condition may become an important part of budget discussions and study. Many school systems have found that citizens committees can make important contributions to the preparation of graphic

materials and brochures for use in presenting data to the community. In some instances, the school board appoints a representative citizens committee to go over the budget proposals submitted by building principals and department heads. A plan of this kind is illustrated by practice in Manhasset, New York, where a civic liaison committee for the community meets with the school board while the annual budget for the school system is being developed.

Many school systems have citizens committees which assume the responsibility of getting people out to vote when tax levies are on the ballot. In Tacoma, Washington, a steering committee representing the teachers organizations within the school system, the parent-teacher council, the noncertificated employees, the Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, and communications agencies such as the newspaper and radio stations has co-ordinated the planning and follow up. In the same community, the parent-teacher council, the Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, and the Citizens Advisory Committee have studied the school district's budgets and the needs for special levies.

In Arlington, Virginia, a budget procedure advisory committee has been of distinct assistance to the school board in this rapidly expanding community. Superintendent Derthick of Chattanooga, Tennessee, reports excellent results from joint sessions with the parent-teacher association council when school system budgets and other system-wide problems were being considered. It is reported that citizens advisory groups are used extensively in preparing the budgets for the central school districts in New York.<sup>3</sup>

#### BUILDING PROGRAMS

Population studies and over-all building programs can be most satisfactorily approached on a system-wide basis. For purposes of publicity, citizens groups can contribute common-sense judgments and special competencies and can assist in gathering facts, providing two-way channels of communication, and explaining the school building needs of the community.

Reports from school systems in all parts of the nation indicate that the best example of successful community co-operation on

3. *A Report of Current Practices in Budget-making as Educational Planning*. New York: Central School Boards Committee (525 W. 120th St.), January, 1952.



a large scale has been in connection with building programs. The first problem selected by the Citizens Committee for the Study of the Public Schools in Bridgeport, Connecticut, was an evaluation of their school buildings and building needs. In La Mesa, California, the Citizens Advisory Committee has considered population growth and related problems and has studied standards for schools. One of the many uses of citizens advisory committees in Great Neck, New York, has been community population studies which have been most helpful in planning for needed buildings. The Metropolitan School Study Council Guide gives a summary of the experience of twenty-five school systems in connection with building programs, showing the values of citizen co-operation.<sup>4</sup>

In El Dorado, Arkansas, where the first citizens committee was authorized by the school board during the 1945-46 school year, committees have worked on the development of a \$250,000 stadium and recreation center, the equalization of property assessments in the school district, and the evaluation of their school buildings according to accepted national standards and the needs of the community. A bond issue of almost ten million dollars to improve facilities in Kanawha County, West Virginia, which had to be preceded by changes in state legislation, was approved as a result of the effective co-operation of a large number of community groups.

The Bi-racial Citizens Committee of Norfolk, Virginia, composed of fifteen white and eleven Negro citizens, has recently been active in helping to plan a twelve-million-dollar program for the construction of additional school facilities during the next four years. Study committees of the Stockton, California, Advisory Committee on School Building Needs have investigated population growth with reference to future building needs, the existing condition of buildings with reference to the need for rehabilitation or replacements, and the present plan of school organization with reference to the social and economic needs of the community.

Major problems involving relationships with other governmental agencies such as city councils, park boards, city planning commissions, county commissioners, and city or county health boards are often related to buildings and facilities. With the rapidly increasing

4. *Citizen Advisory Groups for School Building Programs*. New York 27: Metropolitan School Study Council, 525 W. 120th St., 1951.

school enrolment, it is essential that school administrators and school boards work with these agencies in the selection of new sites and the planning of additional facilities.

The location of school buildings and playgrounds should be considered with reference to population centers and safety factors. Likewise, it is important that city planning for streets, highways, and utilities be carefully considered in the development of school plant proposals. In many cities co-operative planning has resulted in the development of new schools on sites adjoining parks and playgrounds in order to provide for the joint use of buildings and other facilities.

#### THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Another major responsibility of the school board is that of determining the general scope and character of the educational program, including the departments to be maintained and the variety of the services to be provided. This responsibility involves consideration of the educational program as a whole to assure that comparable opportunities are available to all students. In many states, a relatively small number of public school systems have provided for such extensions of the school program as public kindergartens and community colleges. In any community, these provisions might properly be referred to a citizens advisory committee. Problems such as these which affect the type of educational program should be studied on a system-wide basis, even though some related problems may be studied on an individual school basis.

Policies regarding such problems as the handling of controversial issues, procedures for the selection of textbooks and other teaching materials, in-service training programs, essay contests, and community-fund drives should be studied on a community basis. It is imperative that the best thinking of all staff members and interested citizens be brought to bear on these problems.

In Marin County, California, when rumors were heard that several persons were making an attempt to have the study of the United Nations barred from the schools in the various districts, the county board of education promptly appointed a committee of citizens to consider the matter. After making a careful analysis and hearing the points of view of a number of individuals and groups, this commit-

tee strongly recommended that the study of the United Nations be continued in all schools.

Most examples of citizen co-operation in the area of curriculum development on a system-wide basis seem to have been between school board members and the teaching staff. In connection with vocational programs, however, a large number of people from both labor and industrial groups have worked on advisory committees with members of the school staff in developing guides and courses of study and in the evaluation of results.

*The field of adult education* also has provided many opportunities for co-operative effort on a system-wide basis in planning not only the use of school buildings and facilities but also the type of courses to be offered. Many communities have a co-ordinating committee or council, made up largely of representative community leaders plus some members of the staff of the school system, who work at least part time in the adult-education program.

In Oak Ridge, Tennessee, the Adult Education Committee was largely made up of representatives of the personnel departments of the major employment companies or organizations, the director of adult education, and the superintendent of schools. The personnel departments had close contact with most of the employees and knew what these men and their wives wanted in the way of courses. Moreover, they also provided a direct contact with resource people with special talents who could serve as teachers.

In Springfield, Massachusetts, the Adult Education Council sponsors a forum series which is supported by membership fees. In Tacoma, Washington, the adult-education program of the school system, with the assistance of a representative planning committee of interested community leaders, organized a course for candidates for the new city council in the spring of 1953. This course was developed because the voters approved a change to the city manager type of government.

The procedure for reporting to parents on the progress of pupils is an area of the school program in which there has been much study and planning on the part of parents and teachers. A committee of thirteen staff members and eight representatives of the County Parent-Teachers Association Council of the Jefferson County Schools, Louisville, Kentucky, made a system-wide study of this

problem. After studying numerous articles and materials, as well as report cards from 150 different school systems, the committee prepared a tentative report and sent it to each teacher in Grades I to VI and to several hundred parents. An attached letter asked for criticisms and suggestions, which were carefully studied as a basis for developing a revised form. The new report was used during the 1952-53 school year and will be reviewed again after another year's use.

The Sarasota County, Florida, parent-teacher association has been active in helping with planning and policy-making and in solving school problems. As a result of a two-year study on reports to parents, teacher-parent conferences are scheduled twice a year. These conferences are supplemented by a summarizing letter at the close of school in the primary department and by a quarterly narrative report in the intermediate grades and junior high school.

In San Diego County, California, the development of a plan for modifying the procedures used in reporting to parents provided the occasion for an attack on the schools by a group supposed to be representing the parents of the area. However, the parent-teacher association assembled sufficient information to discredit the claims and to expose the motives of the attackers. As a result of the more detailed study which followed, many persons had a better understanding of the school program than before the episode, and agreement was reached on improved procedures for reporting.

Many communities have had very profitable experiences growing out of studies of particular phases of the curriculum by representative citizen groups. For example, in Newington, Connecticut, a committee of twelve citizens (including six faculty members and a member of the board), representing six different vocations, was set up to look at the mathematics program for the school system. Consultants from the state department of education and near-by colleges assisted this committee. Both the school staff and the advisory group agreed that the experience was valuable to them as individuals and resulted in a better co-ordination of different phases of the mathematics program.

Superintendent Michael of the Evanston, Illinois, Township High School, describes an extensive program involving parent-teacher association, a lay advisory council, the dads' club, and an educational planning committee as participants in planning the administration of the core program and the program of unified studies. In summary, he

says, "We consider their help and co-operation indispensable to the success of our educational program."

Many other communities are successfully using citizens on curriculum committees dealing with such areas as health, business education, community resources, safety, and recreation. Great Neck (New York), Arlington (Virginia), and Bloomfield (New Jersey) report success after several years of rather wide experience in these relationships. The present Citizens School Study Council of Fairfield, Connecticut, instructed one of its four principal study groups to report on what the schools teach and how they teach it.

#### RELATIONSHIPS WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES

*In many areas the relationships of school systems with federal agencies have been increasing as an outgrowth of population problems resulting from government projects and defense activities. These situations present unique problems to communities, school boards, and school administrators, particularly with respect to finance and school facilities. These problems should probably be studied on a community basis by school authorities and other representative citizens.*

One phase of federal relationship has to do with the programs of the armed services as related to school guidance and instructional programs. What kinds of information are needed by the young people regarding military requirements and the opportunities offered by each branch of the service? What policies should school systems adopt with respect to recruitment programs of organized *reserve groups in the armed services*? *Here again it is essential that the community and representatives of the armed services work together to develop thoroughly understood and well-co-ordinated programs.*

#### *Other System-wide Activities*

The previous section dealt chiefly with co-operative study of problems of particular interest to school boards. It should be apparent that there are many other opportunities in a school system for community co-operation. For the most part, this type of co-operation is between individual citizens and groups of school employees and between individual school employees and other groups of citizens in the community. The school board should be informed about

these developments but may not necessarily become directly involved in them.

#### CO-OPERATION WITH PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

The interest of parent-teacher associations in the education of children offers a sound base for developing desirable co-operative projects. Experience shows that the members of these associations are willing to give generous amounts of energy and time to assist with projects which are of value to the schools. Many school systems are indebted to the untiring efforts of the parent-teacher associations for their successful programs involving kindergartens, audio-visual education, health services, reporting to parents, guidance services, and improved facilities. Such areas as planning for the school system's place in civilian defense, for the preschool census, and for health examinations also offer excellent opportunities for co-operative effort. Problems relating to fraternities and sororities, released time for private lessons and religious instruction, and homework can be more successfully handled through the co-operative study and efforts of parents, teaching staff, and other interested groups than by the staff alone.

Some of the long-range interests of parent-teacher associations are reflected in their scholarships for prospective teachers and their workshops for parent-teacher leaders. The purposes of the parent-teacher association workshops are to discover and prepare leaders in the parent-education program, to educate parents in the principles of child growth and development, to work out study and discussion techniques for those who conduct child study groups, and to train leaders for parent-teacher organizations in all parts of the community. Some school systems co-operate with their local parent-teacher councils in workshops for parent-education leaders. For example, in Norfolk, Virginia, four such annual week-long workshops, sponsored and financed jointly by the Norfolk City Council of Parent-Teacher Associations and the school system, have been held since 1949.

A related activity which may provide the opportunity to improve understanding of the educational program is described by Superintendent Steger of Webster Groves, Missouri, who reports success with teacher-parent meetings where teachers explain the year's ob-

jectives and programs. In Tacoma, Washington, a change in the entrance-age requirements for the school system was instituted as a result of a study made by a committee composed of primary teachers, guidance staff representatives, the reading consultant, and representatives of the parent-teacher association of the preschool in that city.

#### CO-OPERATION INVOLVING OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Such organizations as service clubs, fraternal orders, veterans' organizations, local improvement clubs, chambers of commerce, women's clubs, and labor unions have many opportunities for co-operation with the local school system. Many of these organizations have education committees. In such instances it seems wise for the school administrator to invite the committees in for a conference to discuss their purposes as they relate to the school system and to plan any needed co-ordination. Another effective approach is for the school administration to request help in connection with some particular problem of the school system.

Other groups are sometimes interested in sponsoring essay, poster, or speaking contests. Here is an opportunity for the administrator to acquaint representatives of such groups with school policies and to discuss the best way of helping students recognize the value of the objectives of the contests. Specialists, who can serve as resource people in providing practical guidance and information, offer other excellent opportunities for co-operation with community groups. Such resource people can assist with special interest clubs, panel discussions, and various special programs.

The increasing recognition of the importance of understanding each other's problems has made educators, business and industrial leaders, and labor leaders aware of the need for planning together. Business-education days, usually sponsored through chambers of commerce or other industrial organizations, are becoming increasingly popular throughout the country. Teachers thus have an incentive to visit industrial plants, to meet managers and employees, and to learn firsthand about industries and businesses in their communities.

In turn, many school systems are finding that it is helpful to have education-business days, during which business and labor leaders are invited to visit schools to see firsthand what is being done in the schools. Planning for such activities involves joint committees of

educators and business and labor leaders to work out the objectives and details necessary for profitable visits. For the return visits of business and industrial men to the schools, some adjustments in school schedules may be necessary to make it possible for the school staff to talk with their visitors about those aspects of the educational program in which they are interested. A follow-up evaluation by the teachers and the businessmen and their employees may be made quite effective in improving future planning for this type of activity.

### *Techniques Used To Identify Problems for System-wide Study*

The identification of the problems which school and community groups may undertake jointly is an important element in the early stages of planning. These may be pointed out in a number of ways. In the majority of situations, the staff of the school system plays an important part in centering attention on significant problems. A common technique is that of assembling suggestions offered by all staff members and requesting each member to give a priority rating for fifteen to twenty-five of them that he considers most important. Parent groups, particularly through the parent-teacher associations or study groups, often identify problems in which they are interested. Employers, through organizations or personnel managers, and frequently other individuals and special interest groups, can be useful in directing attention to matters which need study.

### CONFERENCES ON SCHOOL NEEDS

The plan for holding "un-met needs" conferences, which is being used in some communities and school study councils, is providing a method of stimulating interest in improving the educational program of the community. In planning such a conference, school officials invite school patrons and other interested citizens to meet for the purpose of pooling resources and ideas. Essentially, the conference is a communications procedure whereby the schools, through a two-way flow of ideas, may uncover the existence of heretofore "un-met" community needs.

The procedure followed in these conferences usually provides, first, for an explanation to the group of the purposes of the "un-met



needs" conference. Then the audience is divided into smaller groups, each with a group leader, and the names and addresses of the participants are secured. These will be used for mailing reports, for finding those who might be of help on special problems, and for learning the names and addresses of people interested in participating in the study of problems to be identified in the course of the conference.

After a brief restatement of the purposes of the meeting, 3" x 5" cards are distributed, so each person may list and explain a specific school need or some practice of the school which he especially likes and wants to see continued or extended. The items listed are used as a basis for discussion, so each person may have an opportunity to hear how the group reacts to what he has written. After an hour of discussion, time is provided for anyone to rewrite the item on his card if he wishes. Then the cards are collected to be summarized. Before he turns in the materials to the central committee for use in making a composite summary, each group leader is asked to note the three people who contributed most and who would be most helpful in future work. This information can be used as a starting list for initiating co-operative efforts on problems of general interest to the school and the community.

#### SURVEYS, PUBLIC OPINION POLLS, AND OTHER PROCEDURES

*Surveys.* Surveys may be used to furnish information which is particularly useful in identifying system-wide problems such as population growth, the adequacy of buildings and facilities, salary schedules, transportation needs, as well as many types of curriculum needs.

*Public Opinion Polls.* Public opinion polls are becoming increasingly useful as effective ways of using them are developed. Among the examples are the materials developed at the University of Illinois, the studies made by the Metropolitan School Study Council in New York, and privately conducted polls, such as the one in Denver, Colorado.

*Questionnaires.* Questionnaires are used for many purposes with community residents, teachers, students, and employers. One interesting example is the questionnaire distributed by the Citizens Committee for Public Schools of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Its purpose was to give people an opportunity to say what they thought about

the schools, to offer suggestions for a long-range program, and to describe the type of schools they wanted for the children.

*Standardized Tests.* The results of standardized tests help identify certain aspects of system-wide curriculum problems. As an example, the Denver schools have used the survey tests to find out how well students are developing problem-solving techniques in social studies.

*Interviews.* Interviews with local residents, while time-consuming, are effective sampling devices because there is opportunity to get the added explanation, which helps to clarify problems. Some training for interviews seems essential if results are to be valuable.

### *Case Study Reports*

The case study reports used in this section were selected from a wealth of examples because they illustrate a variety of approaches which may be used to organize committees, to determine the responsibilities of various committees, and to develop organizational patterns. These case studies were also chosen to illustrate co-operative activities carried on in different parts of the country in school systems of different size. Many other equally appropriate illustrations might have been included, but the ones used should suggest some of the more promising possibilities.

#### CADDO PARISH, SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA<sup>5</sup>

Schools in Louisiana are organized on the parish (county) unit plan. Caddo Parish, with a population of 175,000, includes the city of Shreveport, which has a population of 127,000. The parish school board, which is in control of all urban and rural public schools for the area, appoints the superintendent of schools. Caddo Parish is some sixty miles long and twenty miles wide.

Beginning with the fall of 1943 and since that time, three successive citizens committees have been formally organized by resolution of the parish school board. The first group was appointed in October, 1943, to study teachers' salaries; the second was selected in February, 1944, to survey all areas of the school system; and the third was appointed in November, 1949, to study the housing needs.

In each instance, the board, by resolution, authorized the president of the school board to appoint the citizens committee. The president

5. As reported by Roscoe White, Superintendent of Schools.

conferred with other board members and the superintendent with regard to the membership of the committee. An effort was made to get as wide representation as possible and to select men and women for membership who were sincerely interested in the welfare of the public schools. Another objective was to avoid appointing anyone who would be merely a "mouthpiece" for the board or any individual member of it, or for the superintendent, or for any particular organization in the community.

The original purpose of the third citizens survey committee was to study school building needs of the community. At its first meeting in December, 1949, the committee recommended that a comprehensive survey of the needs of the school system be made. Following discussions between the board and the citizens survey committee and after interviews with certain professional school survey groups, the committee recommended to the parish school board that it employ the survey staff of George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee. This recommendation was approved, and in late January, 1950, the Peabody survey staff began the study.

The chairman of the citizens survey committee divided his group into five subcommittees, each of which was assigned the responsibility of meeting with particular members of the professional survey staff. In this way the entire membership of the local citizens survey committee was kept informed on activities of the Peabody survey staff and was in position to co-operate effectively while they were working in the community. Members of the survey staff also had a good opportunity to learn through local citizens about important matters relating to the school system.

The superintendent of schools made all facilities of the school system available to the survey staff and provided all data requested as speedily and completely as possible. He advised members of the survey staff that he did not wish to participate in any discussions relating to any recommendations they might be considering. He also adopted the same attitude toward activities of the citizens survey committee.

The survey report was presented by members of the survey staff to a joint meeting of the parish school board and the citizens survey committee on the afternoon of June 16, 1950, and that evening it was

presented to some five thousand citizens of the community in a meeting held at the local baseball park. The survey staff, in the course of their studies, had learned of some very serious disagreements within the school board and the school system. At each of the two meetings, the members of the survey staff urged the necessity of working out a satisfactory solution.

Following presentation of the report of the survey, the parish school board requested the citizens committee to study it carefully and to make recommendations to the board. The citizens survey committee spent nine months on this assignment. In March, 1951, they made their report in writing.

The work of this citizens survey committee has resulted in a complete reorganization of the superintendent's staff in the central office and in the addition of supervisory personnel as a means of improving instruction. The former staff plan of organization was one that had grown up over a long period of years. It could not have been changed except for the recommendations from the survey staff and the additional work of the citizens survey committee.

As a result of the work of the citizens committee, the entire instructional staff has been engaged for nearly two years in a study of school policies, which have now been modernized. In a short time, a new handbook for teachers will be printed and distributed as a means of informing teachers more fully about the organization and policies of the school system.

The work of the citizens survey committee and the report of the survey staff have had other important effects. For example, both principals' and teachers' views about education have been reoriented in many respects. As time goes on, the work of the committee will undoubtedly have increasing influence on the program of education. Upon recommendation of the survey staff and of the citizens survey committee, the citizens voted a bond issue of \$20,000,000 to provide adequate physical facilities in the white and Negro schools of the parish. Before voting in the election, all eligible voters were advised that \$10,000,000 of the amount would be spent in Negro schools, whereas only about 32 per cent of the school population is Negro. As a result of these experiences the community developed a high degree of confidence in the work of citizens survey committees and a wholesome respect for their good judgment and fairness.

EUGENE, OREGON<sup>6</sup>

An interesting picture of the development of a citizens advisory committee to study the curriculum is presented by Eugene, Oregon.

Eugene is a city with a population of approximately 36,000, located on the Willamette River in western Oregon. It is an agricultural trading and shipping center with creameries and fruit and vegetable canneries. Wool and lumber milling are important industries. The University of Oregon and the Northwest Christian College are located here.

The advisory committee to study the curriculum of the Eugene public schools was appointed by the school board in April, 1950, as a result of criticisms by a group of parents. These criticisms were first made public through the press in February, 1950, when about a dozen parents circulated petitions, later presented to the school board, with about 1,000 signatures. The demands were for greater emphasis on the fundamentals, more rigid discipline, reduced use of visual aids, stricter standards of promotion, and elimination of the core course in social living so as to provide for the separate teaching of the language arts and the social studies.

Demands of the critics first appeared in the press while the superintendent was attending a meeting of the American Association of School Administrators. Upon his return, he immediately recommended to the board that it appoint a committee of citizens to evaluate the school curriculum and instructional methods, to determine the truth or falsity of charges made by the critics, and to recommend improvements to strengthen the school program. The board approved this recommendation and requested parent-teacher leaders and administration officers of the schools to offer suggestions regarding the personnel of the committee.

The most difficult task confronting the board was to secure a person to serve as chairman of the committee. Members agreed that it must be a person with sufficient time to give to the assignment, one whose position in the community was recognized and respected, and one whose integrity could not be challenged. Such a person was found in a woman who had long been active in civic affairs, who had a daughter in junior high school, and who had been identified with parent-teacher work. It later developed that this person possessed to

6. As reported by Clarence Hines, Superintendent of Schools.

an unusual degree the ability to work with people, to reconcile conflicting points of view, and to assist members of the committee to complete their assignments.

Following the selection of the chairman, the board met with her to select the committee. It was agreed that a committee of ten would be large enough to make a thorough study, to be representative of the community, yet not so large as to be unwieldy. Board members agreed that committee members should be persons (a) having children in school, (b) representative of the various geographic areas of the community, (c) highly respected for their judgment and opinions, and (d) with varying points of view on modern education. It was decided to select five men and five women. When the ten persons, with five alternates, had been chosen, the chairman of the board extended a written invitation to each to serve on the committee. After receipt of their acceptances, the chairman of the committee and superintendent called on each one personally to get acquainted with them and to discuss possible procedures.

The committee held its organizational meeting, agreed on procedures, and accepted certain basic principles to govern its work. These were: (a) studies in special areas would be made by subcommittees who would report to the committee as a whole; (b) there should be no discussion of the committee's work outside of committee meetings; (c) publicity would be released through the school board in the form of progress reports from the committee; (d) complaints affecting individuals on the school staff would not be considered; and (e) the committee would attempt to complete its work within one school year. Subcommittees were appointed in such areas as reading, social living, mathematics, and discipline. In appointing subcommittees, the chairman was careful to select persons with different points of view.

The committee as a whole began its work, meeting twice each month during the summer when school was not in session. It examined school texts and courses of study and discussed with members of the administrative staff the legal requirements governing the school program, the philosophy of the Eugene schools, and other general matters. It also heard experts in the field of reading on methods and materials and arranged a meeting with critics of the school program. The chairman and one or more committee members kept office hours

one-half day a week and invited the public to come in and express opinions about the schools. A few came, for the most part those who were most critical, but generally the public left the committee to discover for itself the strengths and weaknesses of the schools.

With the opening of schools in September, the committee began to visit schools and classes. Although it had agreed in the beginning that criticism of individual teachers would not be regarded as one of its functions, the committee found that members of the professional staff were apprehensive. The friendly, open-minded manner in which members of the committee approached their work soon allayed the fears of all but the most timid. Principals, supervisors, and teachers were invited to meetings of the committee to discuss various aspects of the school program including social living (the core course in the curriculum), discipline, guidance, testing, reading, spelling, mathematics, promotions, and the success of high-school graduates in college.

The subcommittee on reading was one of the first to complete its work and to report to the advisory committee. Its report, prepared under the chairmanship of a member who had been skeptical of current methods of teaching reading, was, on the whole, enthusiastic. It commended the methods used in Eugene. The report recommended the employment of additional reading specialists to assist classroom teachers with earlier diagnosis and correction of reading difficulties. The advisory committee accepted the report without change and passed it on to the school board as a progress report. The board released the report to the local newspaper and it received wide circulation in the community.

After all subcommittees had completed their work, the advisory committee held several meetings to put its report in final form for submission to the board. There were some differences of opinion regarding recommendations to be made, particularly over the teaching of the social studies and language arts as the core course through the tenth grade. However, these were sufficiently reconciled that a minority report was considered unnecessary. The committee made its final report to the board at a special meeting. The report was discussed by board and committee members and was accepted. The committee was then discharged. The board authorized the printing of the 22,000-word report and its distribution to all interested persons.

Of the seventy-six recommendations, several were promptly put into operation. Superintendent Hines reports that some fifty-six could not be adopted immediately but that much progress has been made. Many of these recommendations called for improvements which the school staff had wanted for a long time but which could not have been made without the efforts of this advisory committee.

#### WAYNESBORO, PENNSYLVANIA<sup>7</sup>

Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, is a city with a population of approximately 10,000, located in south-central Pennsylvania in the Cumberland Valley about three miles north of the Maryland border and sixty-five miles southwest of Harrisburg. In the vicinity are limestone deposits and interesting natural caverns. It is a trade center for a rich agricultural region where apples, peaches, grain, and livestock are important products. The chief local manufactured products are thread-cutting and refrigeration machinery, machine tools, threshers, flour, knitwear, textiles, and shoes.

In Waynesboro, a program of school and community co-operation was organized under a citizens advisory council for public education. This group was authorized by an official resolution of the Waynesboro board of school directors, which listed four major objectives:

- a) To study areas of the program of public education that may be proposed by the board of school directors, the superintendent of schools, the teachers' association, and any interested community groups or individual citizens.
- b) To make recommendations to the board of school directors based upon its findings.
- c) To serve as a clearinghouse of information for organized groups affiliated with the advisory council.
- d) To advise the superintendent of schools on community reaction to various phases of the school program and to suggest topics for discussion in the "Superintendent's Newsletter."

The policies of this advisory committee as stated by the board of directors are:

- a) To emphasize the constructive and factual approach to all problems. It shall not attempt to dictate procedure but to make recommendations based on the findings of its studies and the opinions of its members. It shall recognize that the board of school directors is a legal body, a quasi-corporation created by the state legislature, and operates ac-
7. As reported by Marshy C. Little, Superintendent of Schools.



cording to specific laws. Where the board has discretion, the council will recognize it as the final authority.

- b) The council shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan. No commercial enterprise and no political candidate shall be endorsed by it. . . .
- c) The council may co-operate with other organizations and agencies interested in the cause of public education in Waynesboro.
- d) The members of the council are encouraged to be candid and factual in discussing issues of public education. They shall refrain from injecting personalities into issues.

Some thirty-two groups participated in the organization of the council. The groups included students, teachers, parents, service clubs, veterans' organizations, business, employees of manufacturing companies, the school board, chamber of commerce, professional groups, ministerial association, and athletic boosters. Additional groups who wish to affiliate with the council are admitted on a majority vote of the membership of the council.

The regulations and procedures of the council include the following:

The officers of the council are a chairman, a vice-chairman, and a secretary. The superintendent of schools is an ex-officio member of the council and serves in a consulting capacity.

The superintendent of schools is responsible for such mechanical functions of the organization as typing letters, sending notifications of meetings, and preparing and mimeographing reports on special data and material about public education that may be of interest to the council. He is also responsible for reporting special suggestions that the council may make to the Waynesboro Board of School Directors for consideration and possible action.

The council holds monthly meetings from September to June, inclusive. The first Thursday of each month is the regular meeting night, and unless otherwise specified, the place of meeting is the library of the junior high school building. Special meetings of the council may be called by the chairman, by a majority vote of the membership, or by the superintendent of schools. . . . The meetings of this council are open to all interested persons, but the privilege of making motions, debating, and voting is limited to the membership.

Special committees are appointed by the chairman as may be required to promote the objectives and interests of the council. Principles and policies may be changed at any regular meeting of the council by two-thirds vote of the membership, provided prior notice of such proposal shall be given in writing to each member of the council. Written reports on studies are submitted to the board as they are completed.

During the past two years, the Waynesboro Council has studied and made reports on such problems as organization of parent-teacher associations, water fluorination, athletics, evaluation of secondary schools, legal liability of school districts, taxes and school income, school budgets, vocational education, adult education, scholastic achievement, reorganization of school districts, and state support of education.

#### WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT<sup>8</sup>

Since 1946, Westport, Connecticut, has developed a program of citizen co-operation in improving education through a study council.

Westport, with a population of approximately 12,000, is located on Long Island Sound at the mouth of the Saugatuck River just east of Norwalk. It is a residential and resort area with a state park, a summer theater, and an artists' and writers' colony. There is some manufacturing of cable-grip devices, cordage, celluloid, chemicals, soap, and toys.

The Westport School Study Council was organized to learn what Westport is buying with its school tax dollars, to find out what kind of job the schools are doing in educating pupils for a useful life, and to determine whether or not improvements can be made in equipment, administration, and teaching personnel. In late October, 1946, the chairman of the board of education and the superintendent of schools outlined the idea for a study council to a group of six men whose names had been submitted to them by the fathers' clubs of the various schools. The council was to be composed of representative citizens, although teachers could be asked to serve when it was felt that their special knowledge would be helpful. Service was to be voluntary and without pay. The council was to be completely independent but could call on school officials for any and all facts necessary to its study. The six men were then asked to constitute a coordinating committee which would organize a council along lines they deemed best. The six men accepted this responsibility, and fifty citizens, including parents, teachers, and representatives of various civic organizations, were asked to serve.

The first meeting of the council was held in November, 1946. At

8. As reported by G. E. Rast, Superintendent of Schools, and the Westport School Study Council.

this meeting the committee decided to study four major problem areas: (a) buildings, equipment, and special phases of the educational program such as vocational guidance and health and physical education, (b) methods of selecting and grading or rating teachers, (c) living costs for Westport teachers and recommendations for the adjustment of salaries in accordance with changes in living costs, (d) Westport's salary schedule for teachers as compared with those in the other communities.

The council was subdivided into four committees, and each of these subcommittees was given one of these major topics to investigate. Various methods were used to gather information. Questionnaires were sent throughout the nation. Personal investigations and references to authorities and to texts were also used. The committees met weekly or oftener to analyze the facts they were gathering. Finally each committee submitted its recommendations for the approval of the entire council, and these recommendations were then embodied in a written report to the board of education and to the people of Westport.

The study council is still in existence and has continued to issue reports on problems which have been studied.

#### MOUNT PLEASANT, DELAWARE<sup>9</sup>

The rapid development of a suburban school system, in which the parent-teacher association has stimulated and carried on a very effective program of citizen co-operation, is well illustrated by the Mount Pleasant, Delaware, school system.

In an area of approximately twelve square miles, adjacent to Wilmington, there are now some twenty-two residential districts containing 13,000 people. These communities are all a part of the Mount Pleasant Special School District. As a result of the active program of participation developed by the parent-teacher association, all of these component communities of the school district seem to agree that they want a good school system, and there is ample evidence of a sincere and honest interest in the schools.

The original school building and, until 1948, the only building of the Mount Pleasant District was constructed in 1931. The meetings of the parent-teacher association were rather typically con-

9. As reported by John F. Herney, Superintendent of Schools.

cerned with business, with speakers, and with children's programs until the early years of World War II. By 1943 the school enrolment had increased so much that the building was seriously overcrowded. Even though money had been appropriated for additions to the building, the administration was unable to obtain the needed materials because of the defense regulations.

The community, expressing itself through the parent-teacher association, demanded not only additional classroom space but also better pay for teachers and the investigation of the requirements necessary to become a special district. The by-laws of the organization called for a legislative committee to promote school legislation of importance to the district. The president of the parent-teacher association asked this committee to work with the board of school trustees and the building commission to obtain additional classrooms. With the aid of the civilian defense group a census of preschool children was taken. Figures and charts to show the increasing needs were developed and presented to the authorities. Finally, federal approval was granted for wartime construction, and an eight-room annex was completed for use in the spring of 1945. A cafeteria annex was completed by September of the same year.

The president of the parent-teacher association for 1943-44 was appointed to the school board in June, 1944, to replace a member whose term had expired. This action was largely due to the efforts of the legislative committee of the parent-teacher association. Since then this practice has been continued whenever possible, and at present two of the four school board members are former parent-teacher association presidents.

In 1946, at the suggestion of the superintendent of schools, the parent-teacher association appointed a planning committee to assist the school board in any way possible. This committee consisted of eight people, two from the northern area, two from the southern area, and four from the central area of the district. Four members are replaced each year, thus affording continuity. This committee does not assist in the formation of policy but makes its contribution through studies and recommendations.

This planning committee supervised the taking of another preschool-age census (house-to-house) and a survey of residences under way and projected. From these data, the school population for the

next ten years was predicted. This group searched for additional sites for school buildings and made recommendations to the board on the purchase of various types of special equipment. At the present time the planning committee is investigating the possibility of establishing kindergartens and is co-operating with the legislative committee of the parent-teacher association on this matter.

The school board, the school administrators, and the parent-teacher association have all worked closely together. Referenda to raise taxes for school purposes have been "sold" to the public by the parent-teacher association and its committees through their acceptance of the responsibility of getting out the vote on election day. Seven different referenda allowing for building construction, the raising of teachers' salaries, and increased current expenses have been successfully passed by the district. In all of these referenda, the parent-teacher association has been the dynamic force behind the scene.

The investigation, started in 1943 to determine the requirements necessary for qualification as a special school district, bore fruit a few years later when, in 1945, Mount Pleasant attained this status. At that time, provision was made for gradual expansion of its curriculum to include a senior high school. In 1950, Mount Pleasant High School graduated its first class.

Thus, in Mount Pleasant it is apparent that the parent-teacher association has been the major force in promoting the welfare of the schools. Their help was deliberately sought by the school authorities to meet immediate needs. Citizen participation has been stimulated by a recognition that the help of the community was needed and that there were definite goals to achieve. It should be noted that a mutual understanding of the duties and obligations involved has been developed. It is recognized that the prime purpose of the citizens groups is to act in an advisory capacity. Thus, despite the unusual amount of lay participation, there has been relatively little effort on the part of such groups to interfere in matters outside their jurisdiction. It is also apparent that community co-operation is effective in producing the kind of schools the community of Mount Pleasant wants, and the accomplishments are much greater than would have been possible if the school board and administration had worked alone.

MIDLAND, MICHIGAN<sup>10</sup>

Another variation in the pattern of co-operative programs for improving the local school system is found in Midland, Michigan.

Midland is a city with a population of 14,000, situated in east-central Michigan about nineteen miles west of Bay City. It is an important metallurgical and chemical manufacturing center. Economic resources are augmented by oil and gas wells and salt deposits. Other industries include oil refining, manufacturing of tools, toys, cement products, seed processing, and shipping.

The co-ordinating agency for school-community relationships is provided by the School Study and Planning Conference, which meets from time to time as a conference called jointly by the board of education and the parent-teacher association council. All local organizations are invited by letter to be represented, and individuals are urged to be present through press releases.

Midland's general procedures differ from those of the typical advisory council program in the following ways:

- a) The school board charts every committee.
- b) A time for reporting is specified, and the committee has no authority for continuance beyond that time.
- c) The committee membership is based on qualifications to do the job rather than on representation from the various groups of the community. The opinions of the respective organizations in the community are heard in the School Study and Planning Conference, which resembles the town-meeting type of community action.
- d) The superintendent of schools and the president of the board are *ex-officio* members of all committees, without power of vote. They are called consultants.
- e) Every committee appointed by the board of education is considered a nucleus for the group and has the power to expand its membership as it sees fit.
- f) When the report of the committee is received by the board, it is then a matter of public information and is released to the press.
- g) The board of education accepts committee reports formally, discharges the committee with appreciation, and takes whatever action on the report it sees fit.

The steps in Midland's plan are explained by Table 1.

10. As reported by Ernest R. Britton, Superintendent of Schools.

BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT<sup>11</sup>

The Citizens Committee for the Study of the Bridgeport Schools was organized about the time the Governor's Fact-Finding Commission was appointed for Connecticut in the spring of 1947.

*Origin of the Citizens Committee.* For some time, there had been evidence of both individual and group interest in problems of public education in the community. In due course, a member of the parents group of the Jewish Community Center became interested and went to the superintendent of schools for information. The superintendent was very helpful but commented to the effect that community groups sometimes ask for such information and then do nothing about it. This comment stimulated the Community Center group to see what they could do for the improvement of the Bridgeport schools.

The executive director of the Jewish Community Center, the parent who had visited the superintendent, and two other members of the parents group met to discuss steps which might be taken. This group enlisted the interest of a lady who had been an active leader in the College Club Education Committee and in the parent-teacher association of Bridgeport. As a result, she became an enthusiastic partner.

A visit to Stamford, where a citizens group was functioning, resulted in some good suggestions and ideas. On the return trip, the names of key people were suggested as individuals who might be invited to an informal meeting to discuss the formation of a citizens committee. Fourteen citizens were invited. Eleven came, and the other three sent representatives. Out of the informal discussion at this meeting came the agreement that a broadly based citizens committee should be established to study public primary and secondary education in Bridgeport. The group decided not to have a formal council of delegates from all organizations, because that would tend to slow up their action if each representative had to go back to his organization for approval at every step. Individuals known to be members of various organizations were invited so as to secure a representative group. Those on the committee were to react as individuals and not as organization representatives, but it was expected

11. Based on minutes, and annual reports submitted by Mrs. S. Knepler, the corresponding secretary of the Citizens Committee for the Study of the Bridgeport Schools.

TABLE 1

THE MIDLAND (MICHIGAN) PLAN FOR DEMOCRACY IN SCHOOL  
DEVELOPMENT: A PROCEDURE FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

	Democratic Function	Devices	Procedures
Step I	Expression of feeling of need	School study and planning conference (adaptation of "Town Meeting")	Called jointly by board of education and parent-teacher association council. Invitations sent to heads of all local organizations and through press to individuals who may have suggestions for "even better schools." Conferences have been held in November, 1946, November, 1947, and January, 1950. Complete minutes are kept and sent to all participants.
Step II	Invention	Study groups and committees	Conference minutes analyzed and needs evaluated. In search for solutions, the <i>board of education</i> : a) charts study groups and appoints nuclei of members who organize and add to their membership as they wish; b) sets time for completing and reporting work by study groups.
Step III	Application	Written or demonstrated recommendations. Examples: "How Midland Schools Work," "Growing Schools for a Growing Midland," "We Are Five"	Reports of study groups received by board of education, published and acted upon. If approved the proposal is: a) referred for estimates of costs and inclusion in budget, or b) referred to people for vote when new construction, bonding, or tax rate above 15-mill limitation is needed.
Step IV	Appraisal	a) By board of education b) Public hearing of budget c) Referral to study groups	a) All items in budget preparation are evaluated by staff members, board of education, and others. The tentative budget proposal is presented as ad-



TABLE 1—Continued

	Democratic Function	Devices	Procedures
			<p>vertised at open meeting of board of education in May or June.</p> <p>b) The interest of the people in referendum gives appraisal on construction, bonding, and tax rate beyond 15-mill limitation.</p>
Step V	Approval	<p>a) Formal board approval; or</p> <p>b) Budget adoption by board of education; or</p> <p>c) The people, by voting</p>	<p>a) After a reasonable time, the board adopts the budget in its final form for the fiscal year beginning July 1. Items in the adopted budget and those approved by popular vote make up the program of school progress for the year.</p> <p>b) The people approve at the polls issues of construction, bonding, and tax rate beyond 15-mill limitation.</p>
Step VI	Implementation	Administration and staff	When budget is adopted the administration and staff are held responsible to secure the educational program authorized by the budget or referendum.
Step VII	Stewardship	<p>a) Annual audit usually finished in August</p> <p>b) Public meetings such as parent-teacher association, civic clubs, junior chamber of commerce, Freedom Week, etc.</p> <p>c) Press and radio</p> <p>d) Printed reports</p> <p>e) Board meetings open to public; regular meetings second Monday of each month</p>	The annual audit is made by independent certified public accountant. It is always available for inspection at the school offices. Speakers on any school topic will be supplied on request. Forum discussions are invited.

that they would report back to their organizations and thus help to keep people informed.

A planning committee of seven people was appointed to inform the board of education, the mayor, and the superintendent of schools of the plans of the citizens committee and to make proper arrangements for the organization meeting.

*Enlarging the Membership.* A list of organizations whose members might be interested in joining as individuals was compiled. When the list was completed, it included some twenty-six groups, representing business, labor, veterans, religious groups, universities, professional groups, parent-teacher associations, and civic organizations.

In some cases, individual members of the committee got in touch with people whom they knew in an organization and invited them to serve. In other cases, members went to the head of the organization asking him to serve or, if he was not able to do so, to suggest someone who might be interested. About fifty people were invited, half of whom came to the organization meeting. Invitations had also been sent to the members of the board of education. Two of them came and participated in the discussion.

*Choosing Areas for Study.* The meeting began with a discussion of problems. It was decided, first, to set up a subcommittee to define problems for study and to assemble any readily available data on suggested problems for presentation to the citizens committee in the near future. Another subcommittee was appointed to study the history of the schools and to try to discover why other attempts to improve public education had succeeded or failed. A third subcommittee was appointed to make recommendations regarding membership and organization.

The subcommittee on problems suggested eight areas for study and proposed that the group start with the problem of physical environment, since this was a field in which public opinion would certainly be respected. It was felt that if a good report could be prepared on this subject, the community and the school system would have faith in the committee and would encourage them to study the other problems listed.

*Approach to Study of Problems Selected.* A set of by-laws was developed and adopted. It was decided to meet two weeks later to elect officers. During the two-week interval, a preliminary check

list for the study of physical conditions of the schools was prepared. This list was submitted to the superintendent of schools for his suggestions. He, in turn, proposed that now might be the time to confer with the board of education in order to explain the purposes of the study and to get their help on the check list. A delegation was sent to the next board meeting. The board listened, but even though they appeared cordial no action was taken. Next day, the local newspaper carried a front page story entitled, "Board of Education Denies Citizens' Request."

Members of the group spent the next month seeing board members to convince them that the committee was interested only in being of help. They appeared again at the next board meeting and were granted permission to make a study, with the understanding that the committee's activities would in no way impair the normal work of the schools, that only two persons would be sent into each school, that *findings would be withheld until after election, and that the report would be made to the board of education before it was released to the public.*

The final check list was tested in two schools before the committee started to use it throughout the system. When the last school had been visited, a statistician volunteered his services to set up forms for tabulating the results.

The next problem was getting the summary to the public in such a way that it would help everyone get a complete picture and would serve as a basis for deciding what should be done in the way of improving school housing. A list of the most glaring conditions that were hazardous in the schools, building by building, consisting of six mimeographed pages, was presented in November, 1949. The school board asked for larger maintenance appropriations. The committee then undertook to "sell" the community and the Board of Apportionment and Taxation on the need for the increased budget. Letters were sent to one hundred key organizations in the city. A "flying squadron" was appointed to handle telephone calls, and they enlisted the co-operation of newspapers and radio announcers. Forty-two organizations of varied social, religious, racial, and economic backgrounds expressed their concern over the situation. Letters were written to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation requesting that an adequate sum be appropriated to put the schools in a safe condition. Personal interviews with the mayor and the Board of Appor-

tionment and Taxation were held. Even though the budget approved by the Board of Apportionment was not sufficient to make the needed repairs, the committee felt that some progress had been made and that more people were aware of the needs of the schools.

In November, 1950, the citizens committee reported to the board of education on the recheck of the public school buildings. They found that some progress had been made but that a major portion of the work still remained to be done and urged that the budget be increased to provide for the needed improvements. Again in February, 1951, the citizens committee appealed to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation to authorize expenditures sufficient to make more rapid progress on these projects.

By May, 1952, the citizens committee had grown to 950 members. Some 400 of them had joined during parents' visiting days to schools in observation of American Education Week. An organization of school district groups was begun at five of the buildings where the greatest interest had been shown and where no other parent organization existed at that time. A program of information had been prepared, and members received issues of newsletters edited by one of the committee members. The newspapers gave very fine coverage, and the committee is now sponsoring a forum in the fall for board of education candidates.

In connection with the 1952 budget, the committee conferred with the superintendent of schools, members of the school board, and the school maintenance department. Then, convinced that the budget requests for education and maintenance were minimal and that any cuts in the school budget would be disastrous, they went to work in support of the budget. The citizens committee distributed over two thousand flyers, sponsored newspaper articles, and made radio talks and many other speeches to different organizations. Despite their efforts, the tax board cut about \$400,000 from the school budget.

The committee has recommended a comprehensive building program to relieve double sessions at one of the high schools and several elementary schools, the purchase of sites for new buildings, and the gradual replacement of obsolete buildings.

A subcommittee has made a preliminary study to prepare for participation in the revision of the high-school curriculum. The problem areas receiving attention include: the effect on the entire cur-

riculum of overcrowding at one of the schools; a comprehensive job description in the high schools by representatives of business and industry and educators; a survey of guidance services to be made by community groups as a follow-up for the mid-century conference on children and youth; a study of school health problems by a special committee.

Even though the members of the citizens committee believe that there is still much to be accomplished, they are encouraged with the progress made and are determined to continue their efforts to improve the schools.

### *Analysis of Citizen Co-operation on a System-wide Basis*

#### COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RESOURCES FOR CO-OPERATION

Whatever the plan for citizen co-operation may be in a particular community, it must be adjusted to the needs and resources of that community. There are many existing organizations such as the parent-teacher association, service clubs, professional groups, labor and industrial organizations, veterans organizations, and women's groups which have established customs and traditional functions. Most of these offer rich resources for help in improving a school system.

In communities which are large enough to have a parent-teacher council made up of officers and representatives of the individual parent-teacher associations, a close-working relationship between the central office administrative staff and the parent-teacher council seems important. The school board should avoid setting up continuing committees or special committees which have the same objectives as the parent-teacher association council. If another group is needed with a wider representation of citizens who do not have children in schools, a conference with parent-teacher council leaders regarding the purpose of the new group and a plan for council representation usually works out satisfactorily.

#### CITIZENS COMMITTEES

The use of citizens committees is one of the common patterns of co-operation for the improvement of the educational program on a school system basis.

Two points of view are common in relation to the use of citizens groups. Some communities and some school administrators believe that such groups should be organized for a particular purpose, then discontinued when the problem has been worked out. On the other hand, an increasing number of school systems believe in a continuing committee willing to work on the many and varied problems affecting the community and its school system.

A citizens committee organized for a particular purpose can concentrate all of its energy on the solution of that problem, study the facts, arrive at suggested solutions, and then disband when the job is done. As new problems arise, new groups can be organized and thus the interest level is continuously high and members of the group can immediately see the results of their activities. This procedure also avoids a continuous demand on the time and energies of a few busy citizens of the community. It offers an opportunity to more people to feel that they are making a contribution to their school system. Such specific committees have been particularly effective with projects like bond issues and system-wide surveys. Moreover, such short-term committees, as first steps in a program of co-operation, provide valuable training and experience for the participants and thus develop a safe and sound base for extending co-operation on a continuing committee basis. There is some evidence that temporary committees can be effectively used to supplement continuing committees with rotating memberships.

Many communities such as Great Neck (New York), Arlington (Virginia), Westport (Connecticut), Montgomery County (Maryland), and Bloomfield (New Jersey) have found that continuing advisory groups have been very effective in improving the educational programs of their school systems. Because of the success of this type of co-operative effort, the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools recommends continuing citizens committees.

The advantages emphasized by those who believe in the continuing group include: a steady improvement of the level of popular understanding of what good schools are like and what they can do; the constant stimulation of creative thinking through the process of solving perplexing problems; and the strengthening of local control and initiative by the co-ordination of energies and abilities of a group that is continuously informed on various problems of the school system.

On the other hand, there may be some possibility that the continuing group may tend to usurp the responsibilities of the elected school board unless careful efforts are made to keep the objectives and purposes of an advisory group clearly defined. If such a group proceeds by collecting the facts and then studying these facts as a basis for its conclusions and recommendations, there is little danger that it will get in the board's way. The one essential for success in either case is a wholehearted belief in the values of wide participation and teamwork. The co-operating groups must be interested in improving the educational program, willing to drop their defenses, trust one another, look at the facts, and find the answers.

Dr. Hamlin,<sup>12</sup> who has served as a consultant for many school-sponsored committees, emphasizes the importance of a thorough study of the organization and work of a committee by those in the school system who will work with the group. If the school-sponsored committee is to be a success, the school people must have decided they want a committee and are willing to support it. He also points out the need for a network of committees closely related to a central committee or to the school board.

#### POLICIES FOR COMMITTEE WORK

The policies for a citizens committee need to be agreed upon by the committee and the board of education so that misunderstandings will not occur. If study groups, committees, or citizens councils do not clearly comprehend their purposes and limitations, confusion and misunderstandings which lessen the opportunity for success in the solution of the problem are likely to arise.

When special committees are organized to help with a specific problem, the most effective contributions result from an official request by the school board for the help of such a committee. As a part of this request, it is important that the committee's responsibilities be clearly defined. Also, there should be a definite time for completion of the study and for a report to the school board.

When committees have been organized for a particular purpose, they have the responsibility of studying all the facts before making

12. "School-sponsored Citizens Committees." Mimeographed summary of address given at National Citizens Commission Assembly on Education, Denver, Colorado, January 31, 1953.

a final report and recommendations. When the study has been completed, recommendations should be presented to the school board in written form.

#### SELECTION OF CITIZENS COMMITTEE OR COUNCIL MEMBERS

Even though some communities have been successful in getting members for special committees or citizens advisory councils by asking organizations to select a representative, there seems to be a better procedure. It is generally agreed that members of the committee should either be appointed by the school board with the advice of community leaders or should be recommended by a selection committee designated by the board with the understanding that the board may either approve those recommended or ask for additional names. This plan enables individuals to act on the basis of their own best judgment. It also makes possible the selection of individuals who have special experience or talents which will be of help on the particular problem to be studied.

In general, the proportion of school employees named as members of a special committee will vary with the type of problem. There is some evidence to indicate that members of the school staff should not be members of continuing committees. In any case, members of the administrative or supervisory staff should be available as consultants upon request of the committee. Some school systems find it helpful for some staff member to have the responsibility of co-ordinating the plans of citizens committees.<sup>13</sup>

#### LEADERSHIP

Leadership must come from those who have the qualities essential for success in working with other people. A good share of this responsibility must fall on the school administrator and his staff, but there are many other leadership resources which can make excellent contributions under proper methods of stimulating and co-ordinating these resources.

Where an effective program of co-operation has been worked out in a community, it is usually observed that the superintendent has taken an active part as a leader and supporter of the program. Where

13. John L. Miller and Marion E. Wiles, "The Successful Operation of Citizens Committees," *School Executive*, LXXI (January, 1952).



a wide program of community participation is developed, additional administrative help may be needed because of the time involved in helping co-operating groups. In general, the end results more than justify the extra effort.

The selection of a chairman by a citizens committee is very important. It is helpful for the group to consider the qualifications needed before making a final selection. The chairman should be a respected citizen in the community. Some chairmen will need help in developing their skills and techniques in handling group discussions so that progress can be made without loss of time.

Careful planning for each meeting is essential. Some of this can be done near the close of any meeting if a small executive group is given the final responsibility of working out the details.

New members of citizens committees, particularly, need assistance in becoming oriented to their work, and all members may need additional study and help from time to time. Many members of citizens committees have willingly given time to conferences for their own improvement.

#### ORGANIZATION

Preconceived organizational patterns for citizen co-operation should be avoided. The essential aim in organization is to get the best thinking and ideas of the people in the community, both as individuals and as groups. Some excellent suggestions which may serve as guides are offered by the following publications: *How Can We Organize for Better Schools?* (National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, New York, 1953); *Lay Advisory Committees* (American Association of School Administrators, Washington, D.C., 1951); *Lay Advisory Committees to Boards of Education* (California Association of School Administrators, Pasadena, California, 1950).

School authorities would be wise not to wait until attacks are made upon the schools before becoming interested in enlisting the co-operation of citizens groups in planning for better educational programs. Instead, they should constantly be on the alert to possibilities of co-operative effort in exploring ways of doing better the things which are already being done and to the values of using all community resources in solving the problems confronting the school system.

## NEED FOR MATERIALS

As groups become interested in studying the problems of their school system, there is an increased demand for research materials, study materials, and other materials which will provide facts. School administrators and school boards should be willing to make all possible materials available for those groups.

## BOARD ACTION

When studies have been completed by a parent-teacher group, a special committee, or a citizens committee, and suggestions or recommendations are made for improvement, the board and administration must be willing to take some appropriate action so that the people experience a feeling of accomplishment as well as satisfaction from their increasing understanding of the school system and its problems.

## RESULTS OF CITIZEN CO-OPERATION

In communities where educators are working with citizens groups for better schools, the people develop a growing recognition of what good schools can do and what is needed to make good schools. They come to see the problem of educational progress as essentially that of buying and developing the kinds of educational service which they want for their own children. They are eager to increase the school system's capacity for production and to improve the product. In many situations, administrators declare that the outcomes have been far beyond what they, as professional leaders alone, would have dared to request before the people had studied the problems with the school authorities.

The school and community leaders from whom information was sought in connection with this study seem to be unanimous in their belief that the morale of the schools and the community had been improved as the people and their teachers and administrators worked together to find the solutions to problems of their school systems. Both educators and other community leaders emphasize the fact that these co-operative efforts have resulted in greater community confidence in their schools and that community support for the school system has increased.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *State School Programs Are Being Improved through Co-operation*

R. L. JOHNS

AND

LEE M. THURSTON\*

Previous chapters in this section have dealt mainly with co-operative effort in the setting of a local school system. It is the purpose of this chapter to examine such co-operative procedures with reference to educational problems of state-wide significance.

#### *Need for Citizen Participation at the State Level*

It is encouraging to find among the states many examples of newly established procedures designed to increase the interest of citizens in the educational affairs of the state. New state committees, commissions, and councils have been created in the different states during the past four or five years by the legislature or the governor, by the state board of education or the chief state school officer, by the state education association or the state congress of parents and teachers. These new agencies have been established for a variety of reasons, but usually because something needs to be done that cannot be done satisfactorily by schoolmen without the help of other citizens.

#### POPULAR PARTICIPATION ESSENTIAL AT ALL LEVELS

In many countries, public education is integrated with general government and is controlled by officials at the top. In the United States, public education is usually separated from the rest of government and is controlled by the people. Thus, the people of each state,

\* As this yearbook was being prepared for printing, announcement was made of the death of Dr. Thurston, United States Commissioner of Education, on September 4, 1953.

rather than the officials of the federal government, are responsible for their program of public school education. In practice, much of this responsibility, particularly the responsibility for administration and operation of local schools, has been delegated to the people living in the local school district. Consequently, the American public school system is kept within the direct voting jurisdiction of the American citizen.

In this distinctively American arrangement, there is an urgent need for keeping the people in touch with the schools. In a dictatorship, the educator must be constantly examining the purposes and practices of the dictator. In the United States, on the other hand, the local school administrator must consult the opinions and inclinations of the people regarding the program and the facilities to be provided for the education of the community's children. Moreover, the head of each state school system needs to establish rapport with his constituency and to harmonize the operations of the schools with the spirit and developing outlook of the people. He must constantly endeavor to develop more complete popular understanding of the conditions, values, and needs of the public schools. He must, at the same time, take note of the judgments made about the schools by fathers and mothers, laborers and bankers, newspapermen and legislators, as well as school board members.

This interplay of thought and action between the educator and other citizens of the community takes place in the United States not only in local schools and school systems but also at the state level. It has played a decisive part in creating our American system of public education.

#### IMPORTANCE OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN STATE PROGRAMS

The professional head of the state school system is further removed from the people than is the local superintendent of schools, and his responsibilities are somewhat different. There is, nonetheless, an equal need of citizen co-operation in the administration of the educational affairs of the state. The state school administrator is in close touch with the legislature and influences the making of laws. He does not directly administer schools, but he influences school administration and school programs through professional leadership and the dissemination of information about the schools. His opportunities for creating public interest in education and shaping public opin-

ion are numerous and important. Like the local administrator, he must make continuing use of public opinion in planning improvements in the educational system for which he is responsible.

#### NEED TO SUPPLEMENT GOVERNMENTAL CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

The legal machinery of a republican form of government does not supply all the channels needed for ready communication between the government and the people. Every legislature has established some type of "state education authority," usually composed of a state board of education and a state department of education, including the chief state school officer. However, no legislature is content to rely entirely upon the state education authority as its sole channel of communication with the people on educational subjects. Every legislator talks with his constituents, receives delegations, attends hearings, is buttonholed by lobbyists speaking the people's language, and studies a copious correspondence as he considers whether an educational measure should be enacted into law.

The state education authority has some of the same communication problems as the legislature. The state board of education in many states has power to establish regulations which have the force of law. Furthermore, the chief state school officer is expected to make recommendations to the legislature concerning the needs of the schools. Neither of these responsibilities can be met without co-operation between school people and citizens of the state.

These communication problems have been partially responsible for the creation of such organizations as the state education association, the state congress of parents and teachers, and the state association of school boards. Some machinery is provided in the legal structure of representative government and in the voluntary state associations of teachers, school boards, and parents to make it possible for the people to participate in the formulation of educational policies and programs which affect their children. But state governments and voluntary associations need to supplement the opportunities for such participation which are now available to the public.

#### FORMS OF CO-OPERATION AT THE STATE LEVEL

The legislature is the chief policy-making body for education in every state. It is true that large powers with respect to education are

delegated by the legislature to local boards of education. Nevertheless, the chief educational policies of every state are set forth in its statutes. From time to time, in all states, legislative committees are established to give special consideration to problems pertaining to the public schools. These may be committees to study current bills or legislative proposals, to "investigate" some phase of the educational program, or to conduct studies and provide information. Each of these committees represents some common interest in state problems of education and constitutes an attempt on the part of the legislature to determine the needs of the schools and to ascertain the wishes of the people.

Large numbers of bills relating to education are introduced in almost every session of a state legislature. These bills relate to all kinds of educational affairs. Some increase educational appropriations, others reduce appropriations; some increase state controls, others reduce such controls; some add educational services, others reduce services; and so on. Particular bills are supported or opposed by various organizations, according to their specific interests. Thus the members of the legislature often find themselves confused as to whether a bill should be supported or opposed.

When important educational issues are being considered at the state level, it is not unusual for educational groups to differ among themselves. There are often vested interests and honest differences of opinion among educators or educational organizations, and these differences may exist not only among such specified groups but also from section to section within a state. One of the crucial problems of citizen co-operation at the state level is the development of a procedure for reconciling these differences to the end that policies may be agreed upon and needed action programs may be developed.

It is interesting to note that citizen participation in educational matters of state-wide interest has assumed a variety of forms among the states. No one kind of organization or relationship suffices to meet all the needs. In most states, the chief state school officer must not only develop satisfactory working relations with the board of education but he and his staff must also strive to work with the legislature and with other departments of the state government. Much effort must be devoted to helping develop an understanding of the differences in points of view and educational objectives of various groups

interested in the schools. Such a responsibility challenges the ingenuity and integrity of educational leadership in every state.

The remainder of this chapter presents illustrations of citizen co-operation at the state level as it operates through agencies developed for that particular purpose.

### *Illustrations of Co-operation at the State Level*

The illustrations presented in this section do not comprise a complete register of citizens organizations and activities at the state level. All chief state school officers work with many different state and local groups. Also, the state education association has contacts with many citizens groups as well as with the legislature. Such relationships as the foregoing are commonplace. We are particularly concerned here with directing attention to those efforts that have distinctive and original features, or which seem singularly well suited to wider use and adaptation.

Questionnaires requesting information concerning significant instances of citizen co-operation at the state level were sent to the chief state school officer and to the executive secretary of the education association in each state. The following questions were asked:

- a) How did the co-operative project get started—who took the initiative?
- b) Who were the participants and how were they selected?
- c) What organization was developed for carrying out the co-operative procedure agreed upon?
- d) What problems or issues were considered and how were these decided upon?
- e) What procedures were used in working out the project?
- f) What were the most significant outcomes?
- g) What major problems and difficulties arose in connection with the co-operative effort?
- h) What is your appraisal of the co-operative project?

Replies were received from three-fourths of the states. Some states cited more than one significant example of such co-operation. Few said they had none to report.<sup>1</sup>

In the following paragraphs, illustrations of significant types of co-operation at the state level are given. The descriptions are neces-

sarily brief and have been condensed from replies to the inquiry or from published reports of representative projects. Nearly all of the illustrations concern activities now in progress. Many have been initiated since World War II and sufficient time has not elapsed to make a thorough evaluation of them. In general, these contributors are obviously pleased with developments.

#### ALABAMA

In 1938, the Alabama Education Association organized a citizens advisory educational council composed of thirty members, four of them being school people. The council has now expanded to ninety members, eight or ten of whom are from the schools. It has functioned continuously since its establishment and generally has been active in promoting the advancement of education in the state. During the past three years, the council's major objective has been the organization of local education councils, of which eight or ten have been formed. Some of these local councils are quite effective.

#### ARIZONA

The governor of the state has appointed a committee known as "The Governor's Committee on Education," which is studying the state's educational problems and needs, particularly those relating to finance. The committee is composed of five school board members, five educators, five other citizens, and a nonvoting chairman.

The State Board of Vocational Education has caused an advisory committee of citizens to be created for problems relating to vocational rehabilitation. This committee has been serviceable in obtaining additional funds and helping with the program.

#### CALIFORNIA

The California Congress of Parents and Teachers has worked with both the State Teachers Association and the State Department of Education in promoting citizen participation in the study of educational problems. One project of particular significance was the so-called "Three R's Project." This involved the preparation of four study guides and a leader's manual to be used by local groups in studying "Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic Today." The parent-teacher congress promoted the organization of such local study groups, which were attended by more than thirty thousand people.



The purpose of the project was to bring about a better understanding of modern elementary education.

#### CONNECTICUT

A citizens council on education was organized in 1937 by the Connecticut commissioner of education, to advise on educational policies. The state council stimulated the development of several regional councils, most of which were eventually supplanted by local councils.

The management of the council is vested in an executive committee, which plans at least four meetings per year. When the legislature is in session, the council supports desirable educational legislation. At other times it has found occasion to sponsor the annual "Citizens Conference on Education" and workshops for local citizens councils. *The Citizens Conference on Education was initiated in May, 1948.* It is a two-day conference held on an invitational basis, with lay citizens outnumbering educators two to one. The conference is organized into special study groups supplemented by general programs.

The council organized the *Connecticut Citizens Commission for Public Schools* in 1952, with sixty charter members who had been invited to membership by a sponsoring committee. The purpose of the organization is to enlist the co-operation of Connecticut citizens in support of the public schools and in the continued improvement of the quality and character of its program.

#### DELAWARE

No account of citizen co-operation in educational matters at the state level would be complete without mention of the history of the *Council for Delaware Education*. A parent-teacher association meeting was being held in the fall of 1946 in a small Wilmington suburb. In the course of the meeting, one of the fathers expressed his opinion about the question of teachers' salaries. This man, who was attending the parent-teacher association as a substitute for his wife, was Henry Toy, Jr., the present Director of the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools. When Mr. Toy went home from the parent-teacher meeting that evening he pondered his new responsibilities as chairman of a local committee whose mission was to do something about raising the salaries of the teachers.

Virtually all school support in the Delaware public school system comes from state funds. Hence, the problem of the committee immediately took on state-wide proportions. Soon a state committee came into existence, and Mr. Toy was requested to serve as its chairman. The job of the committee was to get better schools for Delaware. At an early assembly of representatives of many different organizations, there was created a co-ordinated group which acquired the name, Council for Delaware Education. The council accepted as its mission (a) helping the people of Delaware see the need for better education, (b) forwarding studies to strengthen and enlarge its own organization, and (c) assisting local groups in solving their educational problems.

This report has special significance as an example of the initiation of a state co-operative organization by a local citizens group.

#### FLORIDA

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From Florida comes also the account of a co-operative effort in the field of legislation. The objective was the passage of a constitutional amendment that would provide additional aid to the counties from state funds for school building purposes and put the full faith and

credit of the state behind bond issues for school construction to insure their ready sale at low interest rates. Steering committees were formed in most of the counties of the state. The amendment carried by a large majority, having received a favorable vote in every county where co-operative committees worked for its passage.

Florida provides other examples of citizen co-operation which are of interest. One of the early experiences began in 1937 when the legislature authorized the development of a new school code. The draft of the new code was prepared co-operatively by educators and lawyers under the direction of a legislative committee. It was revised following discussions in various parts of the state, in which hundreds of school people, parent-teacher association representatives, board members, and other citizens participated. Following the adoption of the new code two years later, several citizens committees were organized to prepare interpretations and to assist in implementing the new laws.

The Citizens Advisory Council was created by the 1947 legislature because the state board of education is composed exclusively of ex officio members. The Citizens Advisory Council consists of seven members appointed by the governor for four-year terms. The council meets twice a year to advise on educational matters of state-wide concern.

The Continuing Education Council was created in the early thirties on the initiative of the State Education Association. It consists of the official heads of a number of organizations interested in education and is operated primarily to promote needed school legislation.

#### GEORGIA

In 1946 the General Assembly of Georgia authorized the creation of a special committee on education to make a study of the operation of the common schools of the state. This committee was composed entirely of members of the General Assembly. It appointed an educator as its executive secretary and utilized other professional assistants in making the study. The survey staff worked extensively with lay people in preparing its report. More than twenty thousand citizens participated in making recommendations concerning the instructional program. The report was presented to the legislature in 1947, and many of the major recommendations were subsequently enacted into law.

## IDAHO

In 1952 the Idaho Education Association, the Idaho School Trustees Association, and the Idaho Congress of Parents and Teachers formally combined in a joint agency known as the *Unified Education Council*. The council became operative in April, 1952, and began to stimulate similar organizations at district and local levels. The membership of the council consists of three member representatives from each affiliated organization. Members of the staff of the State Department of Education, selected by the state superintendent of public instruction, serve as advisers.

The primary purpose of the Unified Education Council is to examine carefully the legislative programs proposed by its component groups. After this examination the council attempts to consolidate the proposals into a single program.

## ILLINOIS

For several years Illinois has had a state advisory committee on education which includes representatives of some twenty-five state-wide organizations. Each group sends three representatives. The Illinois Education Association initiated the committee, but the original invitation was issued jointly by the Association and the Congress of Parents and Teachers and the Illinois School Board Association. The committee meets monthly during the school year, arranges its own programs, secures speakers, and discusses all problems of education as they assume prominence. The committee is not an action group, but information flows from its meetings to the membership of various organizations, which aggregate about one and a half million persons.

Illinois provides a second example of state-wide participation by citizens in many operations designed to improve the educational program in the schools. A study of the curriculum program on a state-wide basis is directed by a steering committee representing approximately forty groups interested in education. Within the local areas, however, there are study groups endeavoring to secure citizen cooperation in the examination of the school program. The program of the schools has been divided into convenient areas, and materials are supplied to the local groups to facilitate their study. This enterprise is based upon the assumption that the laboratory for curriculum

sarily brief and have been condensed from replies to the inquiry or from published reports of representative projects. Nearly all of the illustrations concern activities now in progress. Many have been initiated since World War II and sufficient time has not elapsed to make a thorough evaluation of them. In general, these contributors are obviously pleased with developments.

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Florida provides other examples of citizen co-operation which are of interest. One of the early experiences began in 1937 when the legislature authorized the development of a new school code. The draft of the new code was prepared co-operatively by educators and lawyers under the direction of a legislative committee. It was revised following discussions in various parts of the state, in which hundreds of school people, parent-teacher association representatives, board members, and other citizens participated. Following the adoption of the new code two years later, several citizens committees were organized to prepare interpretations and to assist in implementing the new laws.

The Citizens Advisory Council was created by the 1947 legislature because the state board of education is composed exclusively of ex officio members. The Citizens Advisory Council consists of seven members appointed by the governor for four-year terms. The council meets twice a year to advise on educational matters of state-wide concern.

The Continuing Education Council was created in the early thirties on the initiative of the State Education Association. It consists of the official heads of a number of organizations interested in education and is operated primarily to promote needed school legislation.

#### GEORGIA

In 1946 the General Assembly of Georgia authorized the creation of a special committee on education to make a study of the operation of the common schools of the state. This committee was composed entirely of members of the General Assembly. It appointed an educator as its executive secretary and utilized other professional assistants in making the study. The survey staff worked extensively with lay people in preparing its report. More than twenty thousand citizens participated in making recommendations concerning the instructional program. The report was presented to the legislature in 1947, and many of the major recommendations were subsequently enacted into law.



## IDAHO

In 1952 the Idaho Education Association, the Idaho School Trustees Association, and the Idaho Congress of Parents and Teachers formally combined in a joint agency known as the Unified Education Council. The council became operative in April, 1952, and began to stimulate similar organizations at district and local levels. The membership of the council consists of three member representatives from each affiliated organization. Members of the staff of the State Department of Education, selected by the state superintendent of public instruction, serve as advisers.

The primary purpose of the Unified Education Council is to examine carefully the legislative programs proposed by its component groups. After this examination the council attempts to consolidate the proposals into a single program.

## ILLINOIS

For several years Illinois has had a state advisory committee on education which includes representatives of some twenty-five statewide organizations. Each group sends three representatives. The Illinois Education Association initiated the committee, but the original invitation was issued jointly by the Association and the Congress of Parents and Teachers and the Illinois School Board Association. The committee meets monthly during the school year, arranges its own programs, secures speakers, and discusses all problems of education as they assume prominence. The committee is not an action group, but information flows from its meetings to the membership of various organizations, which aggregate about one and a half million persons.

Illinois provides a second example of state-wide participation by citizens in many operations designed to improve the educational program in the schools. A study of the curriculum program on a state-wide basis is directed by a steering committee representing approximately forty groups interested in education. Within the local areas, however, there are study groups endeavoring to secure citizen cooperation in the examination of the school program. The program of the schools has been divided into convenient areas, and materials are supplied to the local groups to facilitate their study. This enterprise is based upon the assumption that the laboratory for curriculum

study is the local school. The principal studies are, therefore, focused at that point, and substantial improvements have been made in many areas.

#### INDIANA

The Indiana State Teachers Association, at its annual convention in 1947, authorized the creation of the Indiana School Study Commission. The resolution directed the commission to make a comprehensive study of education in Indiana. In accordance with this resolution, the executive committee of the Indiana State Teachers Association appointed a school study commission composed of fifty outstanding citizens of the state, including a minority representation of leaders in the field of education. The commission established seven study committees one for each of the major areas of the school program, and enlisted the assistance of several thousand individuals and a few out-of-state consultants in making the study. The recommendations of the commission were published in 1949 and have contributed significantly to the improvement of education in Indiana.

#### KENTUCKY

The Kentucky Council for Education was recently organized on the initiative of the Kentucky School Boards Association and the Kentucky Congress of Parents and Teachers. The council is designed to serve as a co-ordinating organization for state and local groups having educational interests. It has also undertaken to promote the organization of local citizens councils for the study of education.

Kentucky furnishes two other examples: one, a committee to advise on a minimum foundation program; the other, a gathering of citizens in 1952 to analyze the functions of school and community in making citizenship education effectual.

#### MASSACHUSETTS

The Massachusetts Council for Public Schools was organized in 1947 as an emergency committee representing the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, the Massachusetts Congress of Parents and Teachers, the Massachusetts Teachers Federation, and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents. In 1949 its membership was broadened "to increase the general understanding of the achievements, conditions, and needs of the Massachusetts pub-

lic schools and to promote the improvement of public school education in Massachusetts." In 1950, the council invited a number of prominent citizens to form a citizens advisory committee to assist its board of directors.

*The council has encouraged the development of local councils. In 1952 their membership was nearly five thousand. The board of directors of the council and the citizens advisory committee hold special meetings at least every two months. The council has established working committees to study educational problems, and they meet frequently throughout the school year. Four times annually the council holds regional workshops in different parts of the state. The work of the council seems to have been greatly strengthened by the development of strong local councils.*

#### MICHIGAN

In 1950, the superintendent of public instruction in Michigan invited about thirty persons from education and various other walks of life to serve as members of the Michigan Commission on Educational Policies. This commission meets twice a year for two- or three-day sessions where the attention of the members is focused on important educational problems. The commission aids the state superintendent of public instruction in an advisory capacity. An interesting incident in its history occurred when members of the commission drew up a statement about what is right and wrong with education from the standpoint of the layman. This document proved to have splendid provocative qualities, and, as a consequence of its study by all members, the commission decided to prepare a questionnaire for general distribution to the people under the caption, "How Would You Answer This?" Questions were asked about the value and accomplishments of the public schools. About two hundred thousand copies of this questionnaire were used in communities by the school authorities to test the attitude of the people toward the schools, with results that showed public attitudes to be both friendly and discriminating.

In a grouping of five counties in the northwestern part of Michigan, a community-school service program, sponsored by the State Department of Public Instruction and supported by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, has for several years been promoting a study of

how the school can associate itself effectively with the life interests of the people. During the first three years of operation of the study, it is reported that more than 3,000 persons out of a total five-county population of approximately 60,000 were actively associated with some committee concerned with the solution of a community problem or with the improvement of some aspect of personal and community life.

Michigan commonly mingles teachers and school administrators with other citizens in standing committees dealing with the curriculum. An annual invitational conference of such groups has been held for the past fifteen years.

#### MINNESOTA

The depression brought many hardships to the schools of Minnesota, and, in 1934, a state citizens committee was sent forth to their rescue on the initiative of the P.T.A. Central Council of Minneapolis. The original name of the committee was the Citizens Committee on Public School Finance, reflecting the financial emergency that brought it into being. Finance has ever since been a matter of primary interest to the State Citizens Committee on Public Education, as it is now called, which also has assisted in the reorganization of school districts and has helped to advance early childhood education, vocational education, and junior college education.

#### MISSISSIPPI

The Mississippi Citizens Council on Education was established in 1949. The council was initiated by the Mississippi Congress of Parents and Teachers, the State Department of Education, and the Mississippi Education Association. Members were selected by naming the president, or his designate, of every state-wide agency or organization interested in education. In addition to these members, ten persons from the state at large, representing no particular organization, were appointed by the council as members.

The council appointed study committees and looked into educational needs. Thousands of lay and professional people participated. It has presented its findings to the legislature with its recommendations for the improvement of education. As a result of these recom-

mendations, the legislature made appropriations for a more exhaustive study of Mississippi's educational problems. The council has had the usual difficulty about raising money to support its activities.

#### MISSOURI

The Missouri Citizens Commission for the Study of Education was created by the state board of education in 1950. The commission spent two years in making a comprehensive study of the public school system in Missouri for the purpose of developing recommendations to point the way for needed improvements. It appointed a professionally trained executive secretary and established seven study committees, whose membership comprised both lay and professional personnel. The study committees and the commission were assisted by four out-of-state consultants. The studies of the commission were carried on in such a manner as to enable thousands of people to participate. The recommendations of the commission were published in 1952, a colorful report having been prepared for the general public and a comprehensive report for persons who might be interested in some of the details.

#### MONTANA

The State Grass Roots Committee (or Citizens Committee for Education) was organized in Montana in 1947 and was active through 1949. The committee was initiated by the Montana Education Association, the School Boards Association, the State Congress of Parents and Teachers, and other state-wide groups having an interest in education. Each organization selected its own representatives and sent them to a state-wide meeting. The state group developed plans for organizing local units for the committee in every county. When the local units were finally organized, the state group was reorganized to include representatives of the county groups. It then set up subcommittees to make studies of the educational problems of Montana. These studies resulted in some significant recommendations, one of the most important of which was for the establishment of a minimum foundation program. Most of the recommendations of the Grass Roots Committee have been enacted into law. It is reported that the citizens groups were largely responsible for legislation which has been very helpful to the schools.

## NEBRASKA

The Nebraska Council for Better Education was organized in 1945 on the initiative of the Nebraska Congress of Parents and Teachers. To be a member of the Nebraska council, an organization must be statewide and have an interest in education. The council at present is composed of representatives of twenty-five professional, patriotic, and farm organizations. A nonaction group, the council has promoted studies of various educational problems. These studies have been made available to the legislature, and have undoubtedly contributed to the passage of some favorable school legislation.

## NEW JERSEY

The New Jersey Citizens Committee on State School Aid was formed in 1952 under the sponsorship of the New Jersey Education Association. Its work is now implemented through the activities of the state and county associated boards of education, the state, county, and local parent-teacher groups, education associations, and municipal associations. Every county has organized a county state school aid committee. The citizens council takes the initiative in establishing the local state aid committee, forming it from representatives of the County School Boards Association, Congress of Parents and Teachers, County-Teachers Association, municipal officials, and other groups. The state committee is composed of representatives of the local committees. Already much helpful discussion concerning state aid has been stimulated.

New Jersey reported two additional examples of special commissions on which citizens are represented. One of them, a commission on character and citizenship education, is composed of representatives from educational associations, religious organizations, and various other citizen groups. Its object has been to conduct hearings and to prepare a manual. The second example is the committee on educational television, appointed by the state commissioner of education. Its members represent education, industry, the legislature, the New Jersey Congress of Parents and Teachers, the state bureau of the budget, and the education section of a commercial television station.

## NEW YORK

The New York Citizens Committee for the Public Schools was initiated late in 1950, and its organization was completed in early

1952. The first meeting was called at the suggestion of a representative of the State Education Department and was attended by representatives from the Public Education Association, the New York State Citizens Council, the State Education Department, neighborhood associations, and other prominent individuals. This original group set up a workshop conference which was attended by some forty citizens of the state. The workshop organized committees to study such matters as the functions of the state committee, types of organization and membership, and methods of financing. A committee of thirteen was created to serve as an executive group for organizing the citizens committee.

The stated objectives of the New York State Citizens Committee for the Public Schools are (a) to arouse and sustain citizen interest and participation in public education throughout the state of New York by fostering the formation of local citizens committees for the public schools and assisting such committees in their work by collecting and disseminating information for citizen groups interested in public education; and (b) to enlist the support and co-operation of these groups in a working partnership with the duly constituted educational authorities.<sup>2</sup>

There are two types of members: general members and supporting members. Persons who earn their living as professional educators cannot become general members. Members are sought who have a broad interest in activities rather than limited or partisan interest, but election to membership is by the general committee.

Supporting membership is open to any American citizen maintaining a residence in New York State. Supporting members are non-voting and are entitled to attend meetings upon invitation of the board of directors.

New York State offers a second example of a program designed to awaken the interest of citizens in the annual school meeting. In 1951, the state commissioner of education launched a long-term campaign to acquaint every voter with the importance of the annual school meeting. Suggestion sheets were sent to school administrators for the development of plans for the annual meeting. News stories in the public press gave impetus to the program for greater attendance and participation. The New York campaign is apparently bringing re-

2. New York State Citizens Committee for the Public Schools, 2 West 45th St., New York. Untitled pamphlet.

sults. It is reported that attendance has been virtually doubled during the first year of effort.

Two other examples of citizen co-operation for better schools in New York are a council of eighteen members, appointed in 1949 to study high-school education, and another council, dating from 1944, for the advancement of rural education.

#### NORTH CAROLINA

The organization of the United Forces for Education was accomplished more than ten years ago. It is a state committee composed of representatives from the Congress of Parents and Teachers, North Carolina Education Association, the Grange, the Federation of Women's Clubs, the North Carolina Farm Bureau, the Junior Chamber of Commerce, and the State School Board Association. Its aim has been to serve as an action group to promote progressive school legislation at state and local levels. For example, in 1949, the "United Forces" helped to publicize the findings growing out of a co-operative state-wide study of the public schools which had just been completed in accordance with a plan authorized by the legislature. In 1951, the state organization began the establishment of local units of United Forces to be affiliated with the state organization. These local groups were organized in order to provide a better channel of communication between the state groups and the people at home.

#### OREGON

For fifteen years Oregon has had a strong Governor's Committee. It draws its membership from organizations that are interested in the education of young people. The committee is called together at the request of the governor and meets quarterly. It has a subcommittee, called the Educational Committee, composed of lay and professional people. The Educational Committee is divided into subcommittees which make studies of educational problems in Oregon and report their findings to citizens conferences called by the governor, often attended by more than a thousand people. It is said that the Governor's Committee and the Educational Committee have had excellent results.

#### SOUTH CAROLINA

In 1947, the governor of South Carolina, in accordance with the provisions of a joint resolution of the legislature, appointed the South



Carolina Education Survey Committee. This committee was composed of citizens representing different types of life work. It engaged the services of the Division of Surveys and Field Services of George Peabody College for Teachers to direct the survey. The survey staff set up eleven study committees with some members of each committee drawn from the field of professional education. These committees made an extensive study of public education in South Carolina and presented their findings to the Education Survey Committee. These findings were presented to the legislature in 1948 and influenced the course of legislation.

#### TEXAS

The Citizens Advisory Committee on Education, organized primarily to sponsor public schools week, came into being in Texas in 1950 by action of the State Board of Education. The members, appointed each year, represent education, business, agriculture, labor, and the professions. They are selected from all sections of the state on recommendations made by the twenty-one members of the State Board of Education. This committee has encouraged the development of local committees. The planning is done co-operatively with the Texas State Teachers Association, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas School Board Association.

The State Board of Education of Texas has supplemented the foregoing project by calling an annual state advisory conference on education. Invitations go to twelve hundred citizens. Approximately five hundred people attend these conferences, which are held to obtain recommendations from citizens concerning state-level educational policy. Numerous educational problems have been studied, and recommendations concerning improvements in laws and in practices have been made.

Perhaps the most significant example of citizen co-operation in behalf of the public schools in Texas is the enactment into law of the famous Gilmer-Aiken Bills.<sup>3</sup> These bills were far-reaching in their importance because they established a comprehensive foundation program of state support and completely reorganized the state educa-

3. Rae Files Still, *The Gilmer-Aiken Bills*. Austin, Texas: Steck Co., 1950. The author of this study, a teacher who was a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Education and of the legislature, presents a dramatic and detailed account of the history of the Gilmer-Aiken Bills.

tion agency. These bills were the result of a study extending over eighteen months by an interim committee, known as the Gilmer-Aiken Committee, which was established because of a controversy in the 1947 legislature over the minimum salary law for public school teachers. The committee was composed of six members appointed by the lieutenant governor, six appointed by the speaker of the house, and six by the governor. The State Education Association, the state superintendent, and the State Board of Education were all originally distrustful of the committee. After a slow start, the committee secured the services of educational consultants, and proceeded to make bona fide studies. Five state-wide advisory study committees were established and, in addition, county committees were organized in each of the 254 counties in Texas. After eighteen months of study, the principal recommendations of these study committees were incorporated into a series of bills. The State Education Association cooperated with the Gilmer-Aiken Committee as soon as the sincerity of the committee was established. The bills were subsequently enacted into law after a bitter legislative fight.

#### UTAH

In 1951, the legislature of the state of Utah authorized a study of its public schools to be made by the Public School Survey Commission, to be appointed by the Legislative Council. Sixty citizens of the state were chosen by the council without regard to political or religious affiliation.

After considering other plans, including a possible study by out-of-state experts, the commission decided on a co-operative type of study which would be made by study committees under the direction of members of the commission with the assistance of consultants from out of the state.

The commission then appointed an educator from the state as an executive secretary to work with the study committees and with the commission and to be responsible for co-ordinating the study. Study committees were authorized for each of six areas—instruction, organization and administration, staff personnel, pupil personnel, plant supplies and transportation, and finance. These study committees, composed of an equal number of educators and other citizens, were organized early in 1952. Ten members of the commission were appointed as liaison members to work with the committees.

It soon became apparent that members of the commission had many different ideas about what the schools were doing. As one means of obtaining a more uniform understanding, plans were made for commission members, representatives of the committees, and consultants to visit some of the schools in each of the forty districts in Utah. After each visit a conference was held to discuss significant points noted in the visitation.

During the course of the study much valuable information was obtained and used as a basis for preparing recommendations. Each of the study committees summarized its findings and prepared conclusions and recommendations for the consideration of the entire commission. Early in 1953 the study committees and the commission completed the work and prepared a report which included some seventy recommendations for improving the Utah school system. The report and these recommendations were presented for consideration of the governor, the legislature, and the people of Utah. There is general agreement that the common understandings and the experience of working co-operatively may, in the long run, be more important for the schools of Utah than the conclusions and recommendations growing out of a particular study.

#### VERMONT

In 1947, the State Board of Education of Vermont and the commissioner of education began arranging one-day meetings every summer for a group of citizens called the Vermont Council for Public Education. At a meeting in 1951, conversation turned to the subject of the failure of certain organizations to work together. As a result of this discussion a permanent council of organizations that could work together for public education was established. It is by such natural processes as this that some of our most useful organizations are born.

The purposes of the Vermont council are to facilitate the exchange of information and plans relating to public education in the state, to promote research on educational problems and to disseminate facts. Every member organization has full freedom of thought and action and is not bound by an action taken by the council. Though it has been in existence too short a time for its effectiveness to be appraised, the council is to be distinguished in two particulars

from most others of a state-wide nature. First, it is not an organization dedicated to compelling action on the part of anyone. Second, it is intended to be an "arena" rather than a pressure group.

#### VIRGINIA

Two illustrations from Virginia show well-conceived efforts within recent years to interest the public in the affairs of the State Education Authority. In the fall of 1949, the State Board of Education held nine regional meetings throughout the state, at which more than four thousand citizens were in attendance. The object of these meetings was to acquaint the general public with the problems and programs under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education. The other example dates from 1950, when the General Assembly of Virginia appointed a commission to study a foundation education program for the state. It is estimated that at least three thousand people participated in the work of the commission, either through public meetings or by questionnaire. The generous appropriations for education made by the legislature in 1952 are attributed to the work of the commission.

#### WEST VIRGINIA

From West Virginia comes a report of the creation of the West Virginia Citizens Commission for Public Education, organized in 1951 for the promotion of a constitutional amendment that would permit greater revenues for the construction of school buildings. After it had accomplished this original purpose, the commission, composed of state-wide representatives and individual members selected by each county, continued to promote other worthy educational programs. Its purpose is to bring about and improve public understanding of educational problems and bring the public closer to the schools. It is encouraging the formation of local and county citizens committees. Five subcommittees have recently been formulated to study, respectively, (1) financing the schools, (2) qualifications of county boards of education and other school personnel, (3) development of citizen concern for schools, (4) the teaching of moral values, and (5) legislation for the betterment of the state education system.

## WISCONSIN

Wisconsin has a joint committee on education. In 1934, when education was suffering from lack of financial assistance, a call went out from the American Association of University Women to the other women's organizations in the state to meet and discuss the problem. A committee was thus formed, and still continues with representation from no fewer than twenty-one organizations, departments, and commissions. It meets monthly to discuss educational matters and to plan the dissemination of information on such topics as taxation, school finance, state aid, school district reorganization, teacher shortage, educational legislation, and library work.

*Co-ordination of Activities  
of Voluntary Groups*

The congress of parents and teachers and the state education association in each state are voluntary organizations. Both are vitally interested in promoting liberal educational policies and programs on a state-wide basis, and both are usually able to command the attention of the state legislature. These voluntary organizations do not always work toward the development of the same educational program. The situation is further complicated when the state department of education advocates still another program.

The need for better co-ordination of the activities of these two voluntary groups and those of other such agencies has become evident in a number of states. A joint committee of the National Education Association and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers made a study of this problem in 1952.<sup>4</sup> A questionnaire was sent to the executive secretary of each of the state education associations and the president of each state congress of parents and teachers. The following statements are based on replies received from thirty-seven states.

- a) Only nine states use the joint committee idea; ten use the broader idea of a state council on educational problems; two states report both patterns of organization.

4. Joint Committee of the National Education Association and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, "A Report of Co-operative Relationships between the State Congress of Parents and Teachers and the State Teachers Association, 1952." Washington: National Education Association or National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

- b) Much of the effort of joint committees and state education councils seems to be centered upon the enactment of school legislation. The leaders of the parent-teacher association sometimes have the impression that they are not co-planners but are expected to help the state education association carry out its legislative program.
- c) Several states indicate substantial beginnings on broader programs including citizens conferences, public relations programs, joint publications, and co-operative planning of activities.
- d) Where the state council pattern is used, the basic groups are the state education association, the state congress of parents and teachers, and the state school board association.
- e) Replies on working relationships suggest that there is considerable exchange of personnel and materials in connection with conventions, committees, and publications. Beyond these basic relationships there seem to be only a few dynamic and unique relationships.
- f) State leaders of parent-teacher associations seem conscious of reluctance on the part of some teachers and education groups to co-operate fully. A number of times the parent-teacher respondents suggested things to be done which might help teachers understand the need for more interest in "working together."

It seems apparent, from the information provided through this study, that progress is being made in building co-operation between the state education association and the state Congress of Parents and Teachers, and, sometimes, with other groups. But the problem is larger than a matter of improvement in co-operation between any two voluntary organizations. Examples presented earlier in this chapter point to the conclusion that co-operation, to be truly effective, must include all interested groups and must provide for genuine participation as among equals in the development of programs and policies.

### *Problems in Co-operation at the State Level*

Because of space limitations it was not possible to give detailed information concerning the development of and the difficulties in each co-operative project reported from the several states. Furthermore, the persons reporting on the projects in certain states did not wish some of the difficulties encountered to be identified with their respective states, because such identification in a published report of national circulation might increase the problems and handicap the entire process.

Some of the problems being encountered in citizen co-operation in the various states are identified in the following paragraphs, without associating them with any particular state.

#### THE APPOINTMENT AND COMPOSITION OF STATE GROUPS

The manner of selecting the membership of state councils or committees for education is a vital problem because it may affect the working procedures of the group and the outcomes of the effort at co-operative endeavor. How and by whom the project is initiated may determine who appoints or selects the state group. But the composition of the group may be a problem which is equally critical. Some state committees, composed entirely of the official leaders of co-operating organizations, have found it difficult to work together because of limitations placed upon the group members by the organizations they represent. It is extremely difficult for a group to arrive at a consensus if each member must go back to the organization he represents and poll his organization before he can take a position. Few organizations give their leaders power to bind the organization they represent. Broad participation in the formulation of educational policies and programs is generally recognized as an essential element in democratic organizations. The proper implementation of an acceptable representative program is the problem.

Some state groups have resolved this difficulty by selecting representatives from all interested groups, but with the understanding that their actions do not bind the groups from which they were selected. Selection from groups is made for the sole purpose of creating a state committee with broad understanding and interest. Each member of the group is then free to participate in co-operative activities.

Other state groups have solved this problem by creating a state committee entirely independent of organized groups. Such a committee is composed of individuals of recognized competence who officially represent no particular groups. Members are appointed solely because of their individual competencies and interest in education.

#### WORKING TOGETHER

A complete analysis of all the difficulties experienced by state groups in working together would be helpful. Some of the more

important difficulties which have been experienced in this area are as follows: attempts by an individual or a group to dominate the committee, scattering of effort on the part of committee members, arriving at decisions before all the facts have been examined, and failure to arrange for the resources essential to sound decision-making, such as careful studies and competent consultants.

Some procedures which have been found helpful in solving these difficulties are as follows: the committee adopts policies governing decision-making, work procedures, publicity, and other matters before it starts its work; the committee defines the problems it wishes to study; the committee makes plans for needed studies and resource consultants; and, the committee selects competent leadership.

#### SINCERITY OF CO-OPERATIVE PROGRAM

*Co-operative projects in education which have not been motivated by a genuine interest in better schools have almost always run into difficulties. Sometimes professional groups have developed state legislative programs and then called in representatives of organized groups in order to secure their endorsement. This may be a technique of lobbying, but it is not the most effective way to enlist genuine participation of citizens in the solution of educational problems. Governors have been known to appoint education commissions stacked with members committed to the views of the governor making the appointment. In a few instances, commission reports have been withheld from publication by governors who disapproved the findings. Sincerity, objectivity, and impartiality on the part of all concerned are essential to success in co-operative endeavor.*

#### FINANCING THE ACTIVITIES

The problem of financing the necessary activities of co-operating groups at the state level has been frequently encountered. Adequate funds are necessary to assure broad participation and provide for needed studies. Various methods have been used to secure the needed money. Some of the sources which have been used are as follows: appropriations by the legislature, grants from philanthropic sources, appropriations for studies from funds of state boards or departments of education, state education association funds, private subscriptions, and contributions from organized groups.



### *Analysis and Conclusions*

The evidence indicates that there is a widespread trend toward increasing the areas of co-operation in education at the state level. This trend has somewhat paralleled the trend toward increased co-operation at the local level. The emphasis upon co-operation in developing educational programs and policies has been especially marked in the years following World War II. A number of co-operative projects at the state level have been inaugurated during the past two or three years. These projects have such short histories that it is impossible to make adequate appraisals of their success. However, enough experience has been gained with such projects to warrant the following conclusions:

1) Almost any attempt at increasing the area of citizen co-operation for better schools has some desirable outcomes. These outcomes may range all the way from the dissemination of information to major program development and implementation.

2) State projects in citizen co-operation have been initiated successfully by a number of different state agencies, including state education associations, state congresses of parents and teachers, state departments or state boards of education, state associations of school boards, and state legislatures. Frequently two or more groups have sponsored co-operative projects which were later extended to provide for the participation of additional organizations.

3) One of the chief problems encountered in state-level co-operation has been the difficulty of obtaining funds to finance the activities of such state groups.

4) State co-operative projects have varied greatly in structure of organization, work procedures, membership, purposes, term of work, and outcomes. These variables make it impossible to identify any one particular type of state co-operation as the best type. However, some of the most satisfactory state projects have shown the following characteristics:

- a) Opportunities were given for broad participation of organizations, groups, agencies, and individuals in the development of educational policies and programs.
- b) The state organization worked with local groups organized to provide opportunities for citizen co-operation. State groups have fre-

quently stimulated the organization of local groups and have rendered valuable services in co-ordinating their activities.

- c) Work procedures emphasized the making of studies. Decision-making based upon discussion only has not proved as effective as decision-making *after considering the facts*.
- d) Educators were used in a consulting capacity by decision-making and study committees.
- e) *The project developed an action program for educational improvement.* Nonaction state groups which have been organized primarily for orientation have had some value, but a group which does not have the opportunity to participate in decision-making, at least in an advisory capacity, does not really have the opportunity to co-operate.
- f) The members of the council or committee were selected in such a manner as to be representative, but they were free to co-operate with each other.
- g) The group defined its policies of working together, developed its plan of work, and organized to carry out its activities.
- b) Co-operative activities were genuine and sincere on the part of all persons involved.

Progress in citizen co-operation among the states has been quite uneven. It is apparent that many leaders in public affairs have learned how to work together effectively and with mutual respect. Unfortunately, the progress has been much more limited in some areas, and the educators still seem to be proceeding to make the decisions, expecting to win the support of other citizens.

*In nearly all states, there are certain aspects of citizen co-operation that are working out quite satisfactorily, and others that are far from satisfactory.* Several states have greatly improved almost their entire programs through co-operative studies involving large numbers of citizens; others have centered attention on a few problems, such as finance or legislation; still others have done little more than make minor adjustments.

Many of the possibilities inherent in co-operative programs at the state level are just being discovered. When the need for new laws or for amendments to existing laws begins to be apparent, representative groups in many states co-operate in proposing improvements. If the cost of living increases more rapidly than revenues for school support, citizens groups frequently work together to ascertain the facts and develop proposals for meeting the needs. Many chief state school officers or state boards of education appoint

committees to study curriculum, textbooks, libraries, or school transportation to determine needs and to propose policies or minimum standards for consideration by the state board of education. Informed persons help to interpret needs and to propose remedies, thus obviating the necessity of waging campaigns to attain objectives which have been chiefly accepted by educators.

Developments such as these indicate that resolving educational issues at the state level through a carefully planned program of citizen co-operation is being tried in many places. In every state there are still educators and other citizens who do not believe in this process or who do not have the patience to try to make it work. Many others have had the opportunity to see some of the advantages in the way of improved education and are constantly searching for new ways of co-operating more effectively. Herein lies much of the promise for better state programs of education in the future.

## CHAPTER IX

### *Regional and National Groups Are Co-operating*

EDGAR FULLER

AND

EDWARD M. TUTTLE

#### *National Organizations Interested in Public Education*

Public education is generally recognized as a matter of great national interest as well as one of state and local concern. What happens in the public schools and institutions of higher learning throughout the country is intimately related to the national welfare. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are many national and regional organizations which are interested in some way in public education. The extent to which these organizations and their representatives co-operate in promoting the progress of public education should be of considerable interest to all citizens.

National groups concerned with public education are organized in numerous ways. Some are merely central offices for clusters of local and state organizations. Occasionally, the substantive organization is national, with regional, state, or local branches maintained as one means of carrying out the national program. Some welcome both laymen and educators as members, but many are composed of laymen who are interested in co-operating with educational organizations and other groups concerned with public education. The lay groups often employ educators to direct those of their activities which are devoted to education.

These organizations have a wide range of purposes. Perhaps the best known and most influential of these regional and national organizations are established to improve educational opportunities by co-operating with teachers and boards of education. The majority of the regional and national citizens organizations, however, are created

primarily for purposes not directly related to public education. They work with educators to some extent to promote both their own special purposes and the general welfare as they define it. In addition, there are many kinds of national organizations of educators, some of which are identified primarily with public schools. Several of these groups are interested in working with laymen or with citizens groups.

The stated purposes and objectives of an organization which relate to public education should give some indication of the nature of its outlook and attitudes, of its interest in co-operating with other groups, and of the point of view regarding these matters likely to be taken by its state and local affiliates. It should be recognized, however, that any statement of educational objectives should be interpreted in light of the organization and of what it does toward attaining these objectives. It should also be recognized that individual members or groups of members of a given state or community may not understand the implications of the objectives as stated by a national organization or may have conflicting purposes of their own which lead to inconsistent actions.

The organizations considered in this chapter are described largely as they themselves have defined their purposes and reported their operations. The materials and observations presented should help the reader to make up his own mind about their implications for citizen co-operation at the national level.

### *Organizations Formed To Improve Public Education*

The organizations considered in this section are primarily citizens groups which, as indicated by their objectives and activities, are friendly to public education. Their purposes are clearly to help assure a better program of public education. They may at times disagree with certain educational developments, but their criticisms are generally constructive in that they are seeking to improve the schools rather than to discredit them. The earlier activities of some of these organizations have been considered in chapter iii. Here, attention is centered on current programs and recent developments.

#### THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS

The National Congress of Parents and Teachers (P.T.A.), which now has a membership of more than eight million, is organized in

every state and in some thirty-eight thousand local school communities or districts.

The P.T.A. works primarily in relation to the public elementary and secondary schools. Its expressed purposes, however, indicate an interest in the welfare of children generally. Recognition that the school is only one of the agencies affecting children and that the school is part of the community is clear in the following statement of the objectives of the P.T.A.:

To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, church, and community; to raise the standards of home life; to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth; to bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may co-operate intelligently in the training of the child; to develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.<sup>1</sup>

The P.T.A. has formulated a current "Action Program" relating to the public schools, from which the following statement of purposes is quoted:

*A. Promote understanding of the purposes and functions of the schools:*

1. Focus attention on how much America owes to its public schools. . . .
2. Weigh criticisms made of the public schools—interpreting modern methods of teaching the three R's to correct any misconceptions that may exist; explain how the school dollar is spent and what returns this investment yields in teaching services, equipment, and materials. . . .
3. Concentrate on making the school a community center. . . .
4. Encourage co-operative programs between the school on the one hand and business and industry on the other. . . .
5. Use various channels of parent-teacher publicity to keep the public informed of the events and activities going on in the school and of the work of the board of education.
6. Take advantage of the unique position and services of the parent-teacher association to co-ordinate the efforts of all those who have the interests of the school at heart.
7. Study the needs of the school through a continuing survey; stimulate interest by having parents and other citizens visit the school. . . .

*B. Help build curriculums that will prepare young people to live in the complex world of today:*

1. Work with school officials to initiate some form of co-operative educational planning (through such groups as lay advisory committees

1. *P.T.A. Primer*. Chicago: National Congress of Parents and Teachers, 1947.

or curriculum survey committees) that will enable representative citizens to discuss and act on curriculum needs.

2. Utilize all channels available for P.T.A. publicity to inform the public about the aims, objectives, and content of the curriculum and to keep the public abreast of new curriculum developments.
  3. Remembering the need for a two-way flow of ideas between the school and the community, sponsor open meetings and forums . . . .
  4. Recommend that school officials make systematic provision for individual conferences of parents and teachers. . . .
  5. Encourage school superintendents in their efforts to maintain an "open-door policy" between the public and the schools. . . .
  6. Urge every citizen to exercise the privilege of attending school board meetings, to visit the schools, and in other ways to inform himself. . . .
  7. If the school does not have sufficient funds for up-to-date teaching aids and other materials called for by the modern curriculum, take steps to see that school funds are made available for this purpose.
- C. *Support up-to-date and realistic systems of educational finance:*
1. Study methods of taxation that can be used to improve our educational system. . . .
  2. Support a school budget that will meet goals the people helped set for public education and that will provide necessary educational services. . . .
  3. Work on well-planned school construction programs that will supply needed facilities and equipment.
  4. Encourage school board members or administrative officers to interpret the financial program to the general public. . . .
  5. Request that reports on school finances, expressed in language that is easily understood, be issued as simple leaflets or pamphlets. . . .
- D. *Attract and keep teachers who have the vision, the insight, and the skill to help children and youth utilize fully their natural talents and powers:*
1. Support the scholarship fund maintained by the state congress to aid highly qualified young men and women who wish to prepare for teaching.
  2. Emphasize the need . . . to make young people aware not only of how deeply satisfying the career of teaching can be but also of how gratifying it is to find one's self qualified for so demanding a profession.
  3. Urge that teacher-education institutions enrol on their faculties the ablest of educators. . . .
  4. Increase the prestige of the teaching profession by recognizing the magnitude of its contribution, and give the members of this profession confidence and loyal support.
  5. Make every effort to give teachers a feeling of belonging to the community. . . .

sultants, individual members of the Commission being representatives of the leadership of other professional interests and occupations. It has sponsored research on selected educational problems to provide a factual basis for its work. The Commission was launched on the national level and regionalized some of its administrative operations at a later time, but it has always emphasized stimulation of the organization of local and state citizens committees for the public schools.

The work of the Commission supplements that of the Parent-Teacher Association; its membership and methods differ more from those of the Parent-Teacher Association than do its fundamental purposes. The basic principles of the Commission have been stated as follows:

The problem of its children's schools lies at the heart of a free society. None of man's public institutions has a deeper effect upon his conduct as a citizen, whether of the community, of the nation, or of the world.

The goal of our public schools should be to make the best in education available to every American child on completely equal terms.

Public school education should be constantly reappraised and kept responsive both to our educational traditions and to the changing times.

With these basic beliefs in mind, the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools has set for itself two immediate goals:

1. To help Americans realize how important our public schools are to our expanding democracy.
2. To arouse in each community the intelligence and will to improve our public schools.<sup>2</sup>

The way the Commission's work is carried out in the local communities is indicated by the following excerpts from a report of a policy-making conference of educators and laymen held by the Commission in 1951:

*What Should a Citizens Committee Do?*

The belief . . . that citizens committees should begin by finding facts has already been emphasized. All agreed that once the local school situation is thoroughly understood, the citizens committee should decide upon a course of action and do everything it can to implement it.

2. *Education Molds Our Future: Better Schools Build a Stronger America*, p. 4. Highlights Report of the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools. New York: National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, 1951.



Those at the conference agreed that citizens committees should begin by studying the more noncontroversial and easily understandable areas and that, after meeting success there, they could proceed to more difficult problems. When a fully representative citizens committee first meets, it was pointed out, its members probably will have many different opinions, and the study of questions which can be answered by hard facts often helps unite a group. . . .

Those at the conference agreed that "There is nothing so sacred that it can't be studied by a citizens committee which is genuinely working for the welfare of the children and economy." They added that each committee has to judge its own qualifications and pick its subject accordingly.<sup>3</sup>

These recommendations for co-operation cover both professional groups and the educational programs of other organizations. They point out that citizens committees work on educational problems in co-operation with professional educators, both on their own initiative and after approaches made by educators. Their success in any given community depends upon the quality of the leadership and the ability of these leaders to work together on significant problems.

The National Commission assists the citizens committees through its field service personnel, national meetings, and distribution of helpful materials. It serves as a clearinghouse on materials of interest to state and local citizens committees, conducts workshops on educational problems of mutual interest, prepares and distributes helpful study guides and suggestions for citizens committees, and prepares reports on significant educational issues. Also, the Commission co-operates with the Advertising Council, Inc., the United States Office of Education, and the Citizens Federal Committee on Education on a program designed to reach as many people as possible through advertisements, radio announcements, and moving pictures designed to support the idea that "Better Schools Build a Stronger America."

For the past two years, under the initiative of the National Citizens Commission, exploratory work has been carried on to determine the possibility of getting closer co-operation and better co-ordination among the various national organizations interested in public school education. Following two one-day conferences of organizational representatives, a small interim committee was created

3. *How Can We Help Get Better Schools?* pp. 18-19. New York: National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools.

to develop plans. This committee met a number of times and agreed upon an initial list of some forty-three major national organizations in the field of business and industry, community relations, education, farm life, fraternal orders, labor groups, parents and teachers, the professions, religious councils, school boards, service clubs, veterans and patriotic organizations, and women's groups.

The leaders of these organizations were contacted personally by members of the interim committee, who explained the plan and invited participation. Representatives were chosen by each organization with a view to long-term affiliation and for their organizational competence, leadership, and genuine interest in the problems of public education. The first meeting was held at Arden House, Harriman, New York, in March, 1953, with forty-four representatives of twenty-nine organizations. All those present were greatly impressed by the possibilities inherent in the plan. A second meeting was unanimously agreed upon for October, 1953, in the expectation that this might set the pattern for semi-annual meetings for years to come. While no exact title for this continuing conference of national organizations was adopted, it was informally agreed to think of it as a *public education roundtable*.

#### THE NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

School boards are composed of citizens representing the people at large in each community. All boards must deal directly with professional school administrators, and through them with supervisors, principals, and teachers. No group is in a more strategic position than are boards of education to interpret the public to the profession and the profession to the public and to take the initiative in bringing the two together. This key role of the school board group holds true at all levels.

In 1949, the National School Boards Association was incorporated and its headquarters established. These developments put the organization in position to assume a larger role in American public education than it had been able to play up to that time. Among the avowed objectives of the association is the following: "To work in co-operation with every national agency which is sincerely desirous of advancing universal public education to higher levels of effective service to the children, youth, and adults of America."

While nearly every activity engaged in by the National School Boards Association has some bearing on this matter of citizen co-operation in behalf of the schools, it is obviously impossible to discuss them all. Emphasis will, therefore, be given to three phases: (a) the annual convention of the National Association; (b) working relationships with some individual organizations; and (c) co-operation with groups of organizations.

*Annual Convention.* The activities of the National School Boards Association (NSBA) reach a climax in February of each year with the holding of an annual convention. School board leaders from a majority of the states are always in attendance, and the number has grown steadily year by year. For several years the convention has been held at the same place as and just preceding the meeting of the American Association of School Administrators, and professional personnel are welcome to participate. Following their own meeting, board members are urged to remain for as much as possible of the AASA Convention in which several section meetings are usually sponsored jointly, with board members participating.

*Working Relationships with Individual Organizations.* Close working relations, involving personal conferences with leaders, exchange of speakers on national programs, attendance at meetings, and receipt of publications and releases, are maintained by the National School Boards Association with more than a score of other organizations, both professional and lay. Mention can be made of only a few of these as typical of this form of co-operation.

(a) Convention relationships with the *American Association of School Administrators* have been mentioned. In addition, the two associations have published several pamphlets under their joint sponsorship. These include "Choosing the Superintendent of Schools" (1949), "The School Board Member in Action" (1949), "The Superintendent, the Board, and the Press" (1951), and "What To Pay Your Superintendent" (1952).

(b) *The National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools*, described elsewhere in this chapter, came into being the same month the NSBA opened its Chicago headquarters. The two organizations quickly found that they had much in common, and the closest kind of co-operation has existed ever since.

(c) *The National Congress of Parents and Teachers*, like the

NSBA, is an organization that stands between the public and the educational profession and serves the interests of both. However, the P.T.A. is a voluntary instead of a legal organization like a board of education. It is natural that the NSBA and the P.T.A. should have close and cordial working relationships.

(d) *The National Council of Chief State School Officers* is another important organization with which the NSBA works most constantly. The chief state school officer represents the legal authority for the maintenance of public education in each state and works closely with local school boards as well as administrators. The NCCSSO serves the official state agencies for education in much the same way that the NSBA serves as a clearinghouse and representative for the various state associations of school boards which are affiliated with it.

(e) The NSBA has many points of contact with the *National Education Association*, both with its central office and with many of its departments, commissions, and affiliates.

(f) *The United States Office of Education* was, of course, one of the first agencies with which the NSBA sought to establish co-operative relationships, and these have been of increasing value in helping to develop a national viewpoint concerning public education in America.

(g) Other organizations with which working relationships have been established by the National School Boards Association can only be mentioned by name, and include the *Association of School Business Officials*, *Boy Scouts of America*, *Chamber of Commerce of the United States*, *General Federation of Women's Clubs*, *National Association of Manufacturers*, *National Association of School Secretaries*, *National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration*, *National Safety Council*, and *National School Service Institute*.

*Co-operation with Groups of Organizations.* Significant recent developments in co-operation for better schools are represented by various combinations of organizations working together in larger or smaller groupings toward a common goal. Several of these in which the National School Boards Association is participating should be mentioned.

(a) The emergency situation in 1950-51, growing out of the Korean campaign and resulting in threatened shortages of man-

power and critical building materials for schools and colleges, led to the formation in the fall of 1950 of the *National Conference for the Mobilization of Education*. The conference involved eighty-six organizations. From the first, the NSBA took a prominent part in its development and operation and was represented on the executive committee of seventeen.

(b) When the *Second Commission on Life Adjustment Education for Youth* was created late in 1950, the experience of the First Commission, composed of representatives of professional organizations, indicated that the addition of members representing teacher education, the parent-teacher associations, and the school boards would undoubtedly broaden and strengthen the effectiveness of the commission. The NSBA accepted the invitation to participate in the work of this commission and appointed an official representative for the three-year term.

(c) Most recently, and perhaps of most significance from the standpoint of the future of American education, the National School Boards Association has joined with four professional organizations in the creation of the *National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education*. The council is composed of twenty-one members, of which three have been appointed by the NSBA.

(d) An example of a group of lay organizations, including the NSBA, co-operating with a particular professional agency was the *Citizens Federal Committee on Education* to advise with the United States Office of Education.

(e) Many leaders have been seeking some kind of group co-operation in behalf of public education which will work along more permanent and fundamental lines. The thinking behind this idea is that the American public can best be reached through its existing organizations but that the leaders in these organizations must have the opportunity for periodic group discussions in an effort to develop more common goals and understandings. The NSBA has been co-operating in this development, which has been explained in connection with the discussion of the National Citizens Commission.

#### THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL EDUCATION BOARD

This Board was organized in 1948 to improve the graduate professional and technical education offered in fourteen southern states.

Originally called the Board of Control for Southern Regional Education, it is a distinctive and ingenious agency which has made a significant contribution to regional co-operation in education.

Each of the fourteen states has a policy board of its own, usually consisting of the governor and three appointees of the governor. Usually the governors have named the state superintendent of schools, the president of the state university or land-grant college, and the president of the Negro land-grant college. The fourteen state boards constitute the regional board. The legislatures of the fourteen states have ratified an interstate compact and regularly appropriate funds for the support of the board and its operations.

The executive officer of the board states its purposes as follows:

First, it was felt that in the South colleges and universities could not continue the curriculum race—the academic keeping-up-with-the-Joneses. That system has resulted in a spreading of academic dollars very thinly across the board. As a result, we have frequently multiplied educational mediocrity rather than developing peaks of strength in our institutions. Thus, the first question was, how could southern states, by pooling their efforts, by joint planning, on a voluntary basis, identify a pattern of higher education in which states could specialize in different fields of service and build peaks of excellence and strength?

A second purpose of the compact was to find a method by which higher education could be applied to the more effective development of the resources of the South within a system of interstate co-operation. We have attempted to determine the manner in which our agricultural experiment stations, our schools of business administration, our schools of medicine and public health, our departments of economics, chemistry, biology, geology, physics, and sociology could become active, working forces in a system of regional development. We have sought means by which they could team with state governmental agencies—departments of agriculture, health, labor, conservation, park development, and so on. . . .

A third function of the regional education compact is to determine and advance the use of educational resources in the South that are not on our college campuses. To put it another way, how can we use the great scientific and physical plants of industry and government that are in the vicinity of higher institutions? In many instances, higher education has duplicated the facilities and laboratories which are available in government and industry. On the other hand, government and industry have duplicated facilities of the universities. . . .

At present, four fields of endeavor have been rather fully developed—veterinary medicine, human medicine, dentistry, and social work. About 867 students are going across state lines, getting training in these fields.

The several states have appropriated \$1,429,000 to help facilitate the flow of these students. . . . [In the fall of 1952] more than 1,200 students [were] involved in the program, [which] may be described as a small regional university, with institutions and states pooling their resources and making available their facilities.

If that same pattern [of co-operative cross-state planning] is projected to each of the new fields on which we are working, there will be a team of institutions in each of the regional programs, the institutions all collaborating . . . in a joint planning, research-development, and service program. They will be reporting to legislatures on what they are doing. . . . The legislatures will be assured that university and industrial programs, personnel and facilities are geared into efforts of mutual concern and benefit. Each legislature will have the opportunity of building within its own state, by co-operation within this pattern, a unique contribution to the regional system of higher education.

In short, in these new "regional programs" legislatures will not be asked to appropriate money to send students to other states; they will be asked to appropriate money to strengthen their own institutions within a co-operative pattern. The students from all states can have within the region as a whole educational opportunities of a higher quality than we have been able to give them thus far.<sup>4</sup>

The Southern Regional Education Board has brought about the co-operation of education, government, and industry in programs that are easy for anyone to understand. They benefit all who participate and promise to raise the cultural and industrial level of the entire southern region.

### *Other Organizations Which Support Educational Activities*

#### THE AMERICAN LEGION

The American Legion is the largest of the organizations of veterans and has long been interested and active in various aspects of education, particularly those which deal with the development of patriotism and citizenship. Its educational activities are carried on through its National Americanism Commission, created in 1919. The commission's *Americanism Manual* (p. 22) describes its educational purposes and activities, in part, as follows:

A major objective of the Commission shall be the realization in our country of the ideal of 100 per cent Americanism through the development and support of a continuous, constructive educational system

4. John E. Ivey, Jr. "Southern Regional Education: A Progress Report," *State Government*, XXV (September, 1952), 207-10.

destined to accomplish certain enumerated citizenship and Americanism objectives. The efforts of the National Americanism Commission are dedicated to that high purpose.

Education is the cornerstone upon which the future of this nation is built. Where there are good schools we find good citizens. In fact, education is the first requisite of good citizenship.

The relationship of the American Legion to the schools of America is that of a friendly and firm supporter of free education as a means of keeping and improving a free civilization. Accepting its responsibility, the American Legion follows a direct, positive approach to the training of American youth in the rights and privileges, the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.

The American Legion has sponsored a large number of educational activities in co-operation with educators. American Education Week is one of the most prominent of these activities. It has been described by the National Americanism Commission (*Americanism Manual*, p. 27) as follows:

American Education Week was founded in 1921 as a joint effort of the American Legion and the National Education Association. The United States Office of Education and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers were more recently enlisted as co-sponsors and active promoters of American Education Week.

[The] *Special Objectives of American Education Week* [are]:

- (1) To increase public understanding and appreciation of the schools.
- (2) To encourage every parent to visit his child's school at least once annually.
- (3) To secure the active participation of the people in improving the schools.
- (4) To give pupils an appreciation of what the schools are doing for them.
- (5) To encourage civic groups to give consideration to education.
- (6) To provide an annual period of specific emphasis in all-year programs of educational interpretation.

For approximately 30 years, the American Legion has been on guard to defend America. It has spoken with a single purpose—MAKE AMERICA STRONG. It is, therefore, in keeping with the Legion's program of strengthening America for Legion Posts in every community to give their schools all possible support. It is the interest in our schools which prompts Legionnaires throughout the land to assist annually in organizing a dramatic, interest-packed program of events designed to make American Education Week a great success in every community.



## THE GENERAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS

The General Federation of Women's Clubs has 14,600 local units throughout the country. One of the most active of its several departments is that devoted to education. This department has separate divisions for public education, adult education, character education, and several others. The aims of the education department have been summarized as follows:

1. *To ingrain in the minds and lives of children and youth the ideals which are our American heritage; to require the teaching of those ideals, as developed in our history and philosophy of government, by all public, private, and parochial schools.*
2. *To support our public schools and work with other citizens for their protection and improvement.*
3. *To broaden educational opportunities for all . . . [through] scholarships . . . adult education . . . guidance clinics . . . library facilities . . . character building . . . [and] extension courses for clubwomen.<sup>5</sup>*

The chairman of the Public Education Division has defined the public education program of the Federation as follows:

1. Know your public schools and co-operate with school leaders to solve local problems.
2. Secure well-qualified teachers by making salary schedule and social position attractive. Recruit youth of high quality to enter the profession. . . .
3. Work for qualified school board members who are really interested in sound educational policies for our public schools. Remember—*school boards control your school policies.*
4. *Continue to work for better housing, equipment, and support. . . .*
5. Improve rural school education and study the problem of migrant workers' children.
6. Find means of placing the Educational Policies Commission's book, *Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools*, in the hands of all teachers. Organize a discussion series with teachers on this book.
7. Study attacks against the public schools by: *first*—discovering the source and reason for attack; *second*—separating facts from half-truths and falsehoods; *third*—co-operating with school leaders to strengthen and improve your public schools at local and state levels.<sup>6</sup>

5. *Education To Preserve Our American Heritage*, p. 1. Washington: General Federation of Women's Clubs.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

The extent of activity and co-operation in education can be judged from a recent report.<sup>7</sup> Thousands of local clubs choose projects to meet the needs of their own communities as they see them, and the cumulative value is undoubtedly great.

#### THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Founded in 1882, the American Association of University Women has more than 122,000 members in 1,221 local branches throughout the United States and in Hawaii and Alaska. Its members are graduates of 324 approved colleges and universities.

AAUW programs concern education, wider opportunities for women, international understanding and co-operation, and application of the training and abilities of college women to the complex problems of modern life.

[In the field of education,] AAUW branches work for better public schools; for community understanding of school needs, adequate school budgets, conditions to attract good teachers, well-qualified school boards. Branches study needs of children; sponsor nursery schools and recreational opportunities; encourage better films, radio, and TV programs; aid libraries; assist schools in educational and vocational guidance; give scholarships; and find many other channels for practical educational work.<sup>8</sup>

[In legislation at local, state, and national levels,] AAUW supports legislation related to the Association's program. . . . The current program includes support of federal aid for tax-supported schools under state control; strengthening the U.N.; legislation in the interest of the consumer, including measures to control inflation; measures designed to do away with discriminations against women; the principle of economy in government as recommended by the bipartisan Hoover Commission. Emphasis is on education to develop informed opinion as a basis for action.<sup>9</sup>

#### THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

Along with the support of the schools by organized labor, there have been strong overtones of demand that the problems of labor be given more attention in the schools and that more representatives of labor be placed on school boards. There has been little insistence on union organization of teachers in the Congress of Industrial

7. Chloe Gifford, "Education Department," *General Federation Clubwoman* (May, 1952), pp. 19, 59, 60.

8. *AAUW Fact Sheet*, January, 1953.

9. *Ibid.*

Organizations and its affiliates, but the American Federation of Labor emphasizes its teachers' union.

The chairman of the American Federation of Labor Permanent Committee on Education, Matthew Woll, recently described organized labor's interest in education as follows:

Labor, year by year, is becoming more firmly convinced that in the light of the world-wide struggle between those who believe in democracy and those who believe in totalitarianism—whether from the left or from the right—a comprehensive program of education for all ages and all groups is essential for the preservation and extension of the democracy in which we of the labor movement so wholeheartedly believe. To counter the efforts of those who would undermine our democracy, organized labor, together with all other good citizens, must be eternally vigilant. . . .

Organized labor from its earliest beginnings has had a deep interest not only in the education of its members but in all phases of education. . . .

Because of this concern for public education the labor movement is particularly interested in a fair treatment of the subjects taught in the schools of our country. It urges that an objective study of the labor movement, which has become so vital a part of our economic life, be definitely incorporated into the social-studies curriculum. It is especially concerned that a fair, unprejudiced presentation of organized labor's role be given, free of propaganda either for labor or for management. It also urges that its members take an active part in the educational affairs of their communities, by serving as members of boards of education, parent-teacher associations, etc. To secure the best public educational system possible, organized labor has always stood four-square for improving the lot of the teacher, and thus encouraging higher types of young people to become teachers.<sup>10</sup>

These attitudes were amplified by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor in January, 1952, as follows:

In the early history of our country the trade unions helped establish the public school and pressed for compulsory school attendance laws and the elimination of child labor. Since then we have contributed richly to the development of the public school system and the protection and promotion of the welfare of America's children and youth.

Today, however, we must do more than merely urge "more funds for education." We must analyze and evaluate the programs through which these funds are administered.

. . . . .

10. *Labor and Education in 1951*, p. 3. Reports of the Executive Council and the Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor on Education in 1951. Washington: American Federation of Labor, 1951.

We recognize that a layman cannot determine technical professional procedure in education any more than he can properly do so in any other profession or trade like medicine or law or building construction. But he can, as a layman, judge the results of such training.

Labor must seek and continually work to have its qualified men and women serve on boards of education and in this manner help shape educational policy.

... The spot-check study made by the American Federation of Labor's Standing Committee on Education last year showed the continuing lack of labor representation on boards of education.

We emphatically demand that the teacher's personal civil liberties be completely protected. The teacher must be free to teach the truth. He must also be free himself.

The lack of freedom of the American teacher today is alarming. It is this lack of freedom which more than any other factor, we contend, is responsible for the shortage of teachers in the United States today. . . .

The teacher, like every other worker, must be economically more free than he is today. . . . The salary should be increased until he reaches a salary level commensurate with the significant contribution he is making to the communities. . . .

The teacher must be relatively more free in his contemplation of his old age security than he is today. His small salary does not enable him to save much. Teachers' pensions, in most cases, are not adequate. . . .

The teacher must have enough free time—unassigned time, to enable him to work closely with the individual pupil, to give to his work that inspiration which must come from close personal work with the individual child and youth. The teacher must, in addition, have adequate leisure time for his relaxation and time to continue his personal professional growth.

The teacher must be free to use his professional training and experience in helping shape administrative school policy. The tragic waste inherent in a system which denies the teacher—the professional worker who is most closely identified with actual child training—a right to participate in planning the educational program for a school system is certainly disturbing.

There is an urgent need for the development of special machinery through which teachers, and, incidentally other public employees, may seek to adjudicate their problems without threats or reprisals against them, for any protective action which they may take, in their own behalf. In such a machinery, the teacher, as a worker with heavy professional responsibilities, should have representation of his own choosing.<sup>11</sup>

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-8.

These points of view must be taken into account by professional educators, school boards, and citizens generally. Organized labor is strong and, in general, supports the schools as well as any segment of our society. Nevertheless, its special interests must be balanced with others. The schools should not be permitted to become a battleground in which opposing interests such as labor and management seek to blueprint the future. One of the best ways to avoid such a possibility should be through better and more representative co-operation in improving the schools.

#### THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES

The Chamber of Commerce of the United States represents business interests generally and has co-operated with educators in many programs of mutual concern. The activities in education follow rather closely the following policy statement adopted by the organization in 1952:

*Value of Education.* Education is an investment in people. It is essential to our individual well-being and national progress. Education achieves a major objective when students learn intellectual honesty, develop a spirit of inquiry, and seek the truth in all they hear and read. . . .

*Business and Education.* Businessmen have a vital stake in the progress of education, both public and private. Increased economic and cultural well-being will accompany a continuing rise in the educational levels of the American people. Business shares in these benefits as an integral part of the whole community.

*Education for All Citizens.* An adequate educational opportunity through our schools is the birthright of every American citizen. To furnish this opportunity requires well-trained and enthusiastic teachers, adequately compensated; a sound and properly balanced curriculum; and suitable physical facilities. All of this takes money. Businessmen should accept the responsibility for informing themselves about school needs in their community. They should analyze the resources of the community to meet these needs. They should then assume their fair share of the responsibility for securing the necessary funds on an equitable basis.

*Adult Education.* Public schools should make provision for programs of adult education for the residents of their communities to furnish people with opportunities for self-improvement and greater social and economic understanding.

*Financing Education.* The American public school system is traditionally and distinctively a community affair. The states and the local school districts must continue to accept full responsibility for the financing and direction of their public schools. . . .

... In the public school, students with widely differing backgrounds learn to work together and to share common educational, athletic, and social experiences. Public schools are traditionally and constitutionally supported by public funds raised by general taxation. Public school funds should be administered by public officials and should not be used to support any privately controlled program.

*Citizen Participation Essential.* Active citizen participation is basic to the preservation of the American public school system. The businessman contributes invaluable public service by participating in the work of boards of education. In his capacity as a parent and a citizen, as well as through his chambers of commerce and trade organizations, he observes, evaluates, stimulates, and takes part in educational activities. Thereby he helps to bring about a better understanding and a working partnership between the professional educator and the business community to the benefit of public education.<sup>12</sup>

#### THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS

The National Association of Manufacturers supports educational activities largely similar to those of the United States Chamber of Commerce. It has an education department in New York staffed by four professional educators. Elsewhere there are five divisional and twelve regional offices. A professional educator administers the activities of each divisional office. An elaborate system of professional advisers culminates in the NAM Educational Advisory Council, which consists of twenty-four professional educators selected from the memberships of leading national professional organizations.

The educational objectives of the NAM are stated as follows:

1. To assist schools in making available to the youth of the nation a basic knowledge and appreciation of the advantages as well as the responsibilities of living in a free and dynamic society such as we enjoy here in the United States.
2. To make available to teachers at all educational levels informative material concerning the role of industry in the growth and development of our country.
3. To bring about closer co-operation between industry and education to the end that each may understand the other's problems and contribute jointly toward their solution.
4. To encourage industrialists to give active leadership and personal support to the fundamental consideration of more adequate compensation

12. "Education Policies of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States." Washington: Government Printing Office, 1952.

- for teachers on a basis consistent with their professional stature, and to the provision of adequate educational facilities and equipment.
5. To promote closer co-operation between industry and education in those areas of the total education program which deal with vocational guidance and vocational education with a view to improving the employability and employment efficiency of youth and adults.<sup>13</sup>

Activities to implement these policies include high-school and college speaking programs, education-industry conferences, business-industry-education days (visits to industries), education-industry-business days (visits to schools), annual congress of American industry programs, scholarships, supplementary classroom material, visual aids, etc.

The Department assumes leadership in the organization and conduct of conferences for educators and industrialists throughout the country. This is a program in which educators and industrialists, equal in number, if possible, meet together as a discussion group.<sup>14</sup>

#### AMERICAN IRON AND STEEL INSTITUTE

Reference is made to the educational activities of the American Iron and Steel Institute principally because of the exceptional quality of a series of printed guides for citizens who have opportunities to participate in school programs. The following excerpts illustrate the common-sense advice given in one useful illustrated bulletin:

*Encourage questions.* They generally reflect a desire to learn more, rather than imply criticism.

*Remember that young people are very direct in their questioning.* Don't be hurt or offended if their questions are sharp or if they differ with you. It is a measure of their honesty and their acceptance of you as a person willing to discuss questions that concern them.

Young people are usually curious. They will question and seek facts if your attitude shows a willingness to give and take in discussion. *By the way . . . do you wear a halo? It's out of place in the classroom. Recognize the general problems that may exist in your company and in your community.*

Remember that the schools are not the place for promotion of a single point of view (in other words, watch out for a bias of your own!)

13. *Handbook of NAM Activities and Services for Education-Industry Co-operation*, p. 4. New York: National Association of Manufacturers, October, 1951.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 11.

Select your examples and illustrations with care to make certain they give an accurate picture. An objective, impartial viewpoint will build appreciation for you and your company.

*And . . . you'll find that education is a two-way street. You'll learn a lot in the discussion too.*<sup>15</sup>

### *Educators Seek Co-operation of Other Organizations*

Almost all organizations of educators at area, regional, and national levels co-operate with other organizations to promote education. Some have special machinery for the purpose, such as the Lay Relations Committee of the National Education Association, but most regard participation as a natural adjunct of all or many of their operations. Many professionally initiated programs illustrate such participation—the Southern States Work-Conference, several groups of school systems associated together in areas or nationally for mutual improvement, such as the Metropolitan School Study Council and the Co-operative Project on Educational Administration of the Kellogg Foundation. The members of the National Council of Chief State School Officers from the northeastern and southern states have met at times with the total membership of their state boards of education. Laymen are increasingly brought into the meetings of professional groups for increasingly responsible participation.

Others among the hundreds of organizations of numerous kinds interested in education which depend largely upon citizen co-operation to achieve their respective educational policies programs are Phi Delta Kappa, Delta Kappa Gamma, the League of Women Voters, the National Grange, the Farmers' Union, the National Farm Bureau Federation, the Boy Scouts of America, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and several national service clubs both for men and for women.

The Adult Education Association of the United States works particularly with adult students, whether in organized groups or through the mass media. Organizations interested in utilizing the mass media in increasingly significant ways include the National Association of Educational Broadcasters, the Joint Committee on Educational Television, and the National Citizens Committee for

15. *Teacher for a Day*, pp. 20-21. New York: American Iron and Steel Institute, November, 1952.



Educational Television, all of which have programs emphasizing citizen co-operation for better schools.

Many national organizations have adopted statements of purposes or objectives which indicate a strong interest in public education. Most of these are attempting to work constructively with educational groups on national, state, and local levels. However, the test of an organization's interest in education and its desire to co-operate on a bona fide basis is not so much what is stated in its printed literature as what the organization and its state and local affiliates and members do toward helping improve the schools and public education in general.

### *Conclusions*

Each of the area, regional, and national organizations dealt with in this chapter has experienced some of the difficulties of citizen co-operation discussed in chapter iv. When lay citizens are "brought in" by teacher organizations there may be more professional domination than co-operation. The domination may run the other way when professionals who are employed by lay groups proceed to "bring in" their professional colleagues to examine programs and courses of action already outlined.

Citizens groups may promote co-operation with educators either to assist them in improving the schools or to get them to change their ways. Their purposes may be either to help school boards improve the schools or to change the policy directions of school boards.

Citizen co-operation at the national level, as well as at state and local levels, may either strengthen education or waste time and create confusion. After all the pitfalls and sad experiences are tabulated, however, the balance lies clearly on the side of increased citizen co-operation. The difficulties of successful group co-operation are enormous but the alternative is failure to achieve common understandings and goals, with resultant handicaps to the schools. Without organized co-operation the schools are isolated from the people. Whether organizations intend to promote public education generally or merely to accomplish certain purposes known only to their own leaders, they represent widespread viewpoints of large segments of the public which should be given full freedom of ex-

pression. Group viewpoints often tend to offset each other; for example, organized labor's emphasis differs from that of organized industry. So long as all special viewpoints are considered in an objective manner, and a reasonable balance is attained, the schools are likely to reflect generally the better aspects of the society in which they exist. Almost all organizations support education generally and differ only on details and on the relative emphases given their special interests.

Opportunities for and interest in co-operation and understanding between educators and the public seem to be increasing. Both groups should encourage the trend and should work together to overcome the numerous practical difficulties which so often cast doubt on the value of efforts to achieve real citizen co-operation in education. On the whole, the total impact seems to be good for education. Therefore, the moves toward better co-ordination and more meaningful co-operation at the national and regional levels should be encouraged.

**SECTION III**  
**PLANNING FOR BETTER CO-OPERATION**

## CHAPTER X

### *Co-operative Procedures Should Be Based on Sound Principles*

EDGAR L. MORPHET

#### *The Need for Guiding Principles*

The discussion in previous chapters has served to emphasize problems, trends, and points of view relating to citizen co-operation in education. It is evident that this movement has made valuable contributions to the improvement of state and local school systems and educational programs. However, it is also apparent that mistakes have occasionally resulted in questions and uncertainties that caused superintendents and school boards to discourage further efforts of this kind. Many others who believe in the soundness of this approach have hesitated to undertake such projects because they do not know how they can best begin or how they can best proceed, once they have started.

A number of the major issues relating to citizen co-operation in education have been presented in chapter iv, and additional issues are noted in the other chapters. How can such issues be most satisfactorily resolved?

It is apparent that there is not likely to be any pattern or "blueprint" that will fit all types of conditions or communities and every aspect of group co-operation. It should be equally evident that there are some basic principles and criteria which should be useful for general guidance. An analysis of the experiences across the nation and of studies reported in this yearbook and elsewhere in the literature<sup>1</sup> indicates that the principles and criteria presented and

1. See especially: *Citizens and Educational Policies* (Washington: Educational Policies Commission, 1951); *How Can We Organize for Better Schools: A Guidebook for Citizens Committees* (New York: National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, 1953); *Lay Advisory Committees* (Washington:

discussed in the remainder of this chapter should be used for general guidance by citizens groups in planning, carrying out, and evaluating activities involving co-operative projects in education. In general, these principles should be considered basic to all types and levels of co-operation. Further experience and study during coming years will, no doubt, bring to light additional principles and criteria.

### *General Principles Underlying Co-operation<sup>2</sup>*

1. *In this country the basic policies relating to public education should be decided by the people.* In our form of government the people are responsible for deciding directly or indirectly all basic policies. This principle, as it relates to public education, has been generally recognized since the early days of our national history. In each state the voters adopt a constitution and must approve all amendments thereto. These constitutional provisions set the pattern for the educational program in the state. The citizens of the state also elect the legislators who enact the laws under which the schools are operated.

On the local level, in the early days, the people held town meetings at which they made decisions regarding educational matters. As communities have become more complex, such direct control over policies is no longer practicable, but the people still have opportunity to determine the general nature of the policy decisions by electing the persons to represent them on the board of education. In most school systems the people also decide by direct vote the amount to be included in the budget or the taxes to be levied for school support and determine the amount of school bonds to be approved.

2. *The people should delegate to their legally selected representatives the responsibility for final decision on specific policies relating*

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American Association of School Administrators, 1951); "Citizens Organize for Better Schools," *School Executive* (special issue), January, 1952; *Public Action for Powerful Schools* (Metropolitan School Study Council, Research Study No. 3; New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1949); Herbert A. Hamlin, *Citizens Committees in the Public Schools* (Danville, Illinois: Interstate Printers and Publishers, 1952); Merle R. Sumption, *How To Conduct a Citizens School Survey* (New York: Prentice-Hall Publishing Co., 1952).

2. The principles and criteria proposed in this chapter are derived in part from materials previously prepared by the writer for use in a forthcoming book on co-operative school studies.

*to public education.* Usually the state constitution includes only the broad general policies relating to education. Many more specific policies are needed to assure a good system of public schools. Most of the policies having state-wide application are set forth in laws enacted by the legislature; others may, when authorized by law, be prescribed by the state board of education established to represent the people in state-wide educational matters.

The people in each local school district select their board of education. This board determines the specific policies to be observed in planning and conducting the public school program in that district.

*The board of education is thus the legally established agency which is responsible to the people for policies pertaining to the public schools and for the development of a satisfactory program of public school education.* This responsibility of the board cannot be assumed by or delegated to any other group. All citizens should understand clearly that recommendations regarding policies for the public schools must be approved by the board of education before they can become effective.

3. *The board of education should keep the citizens informed regarding educational needs and enlist their aid in the development of a satisfactory public school program.* The state or local board of education should seek to keep in close touch with the people and to obtain information regarding the community and the schools for use in deciding on policies which will best meet the needs of the community. This means that the board should have technical educational assistance and advice. Also it should keep lay citizens informed regarding important educational developments. It follows, then, that the board should be interested in procedures for obtaining recommendations from citizens groups or committees as well as from educators. Recommendations from the citizens of the community should be welcomed and should always receive appropriate consideration.

4. *Both educators and lay citizens have responsibilities to meet and contributions to make to the development of the public school program.* Both educators and lay citizens have a vital stake in public schools and have important responsibilities to meet if the schools are to function satisfactorily. However, there are certain

things pertaining to the operation of the schools which educators are better prepared to do than other citizens.

A good board of education does not attempt to administer the schools. It selects a competent person to serve as administrator and holds him and his staff responsible for administering the educational program in accordance with policies approved by the board. His counsel and recommendations are sought when policies are being considered for adoption or revision. Similarly, lay citizens should expect school personnel to be competent in their respective fields; for example, to know the best methods of teaching and to understand how to utilize most effectively the principles of learning.

Citizens groups should help determine the objectives and scope of the educational program of the community and should assist in evaluating developments. They need the counsel of educators to arrive at the best answers as to *what should be done*, and educators frequently need the counsel and support of lay citizens concerning *how certain things should be worked out under existing circumstances*.

5. *The development of a sound educational program requires the best co-operative efforts of both educators and lay citizens.* On the basis of research studies and the evaluation of many types of experience extending over several generations, an extensive body of knowledge has been assembled in the field of education. We now know that there are certain ways of doing this—extending from the teaching of reading to the planning of a school building—which are much better than others. Policies can be sound or unsound educationally as well as desirable or undesirable from a community point of view. Well-trained and competent educational personnel are needed to help in planning a sound program of education. Yet, it cannot be done satisfactorily by educators alone; nor should it be left entirely to other groups.

This relationship is recognized in part by the laws of most states which generally provide that the superintendent of schools is to advise the school board in regard to policies and to submit recommendations on educational matters for their consideration. The relationship has also been generally recognized in numerous types of co-operative effort in practically all school systems, ranging from informal teacher-parent conferences and parent-teacher association activities to more formally organized citizens committees.

6. *Educators and other citizens should share the responsibility for stimulating, encouraging, and facilitating co-operation on projects relating to the schools.* The proper functioning of a democracy requires the full participation of the citizens. The public school program should help to prepare all citizens for such participation. People need to learn how to work together constructively for the common good. If they learn how to co-operate effectively in improving the public school program which affects the home, the community, the state, and the nation, they should be in better position to participate constructively in improving other aspects of democratic life.

Because of the nature of their legal relations with the board, educators cannot proceed to develop a school program without some reference to the public. The residents of a community or state in general have as much responsibility for and should be as much interested in improving the schools and educational institutions as the educators. Since schools are a co-operative responsibility, all citizens should constantly be interested in searching for ways and means of improving the schools through co-operative effort.

7. *All co-operative efforts to improve the educational program should utilize the basic principles of human relations in a democracy.* There is nothing mysterious or unique about co-operation in promoting the cause of education. It is essentially a problem in human relations. Only as the basic principles of human relations such as the following are recognized and utilized can any co-operative effort be expected to work out satisfactorily:

- a) There should be respect for the individual, yet consistent recognition of the fact that the common good should be considered paramount.
- b) The talents and abilities of all persons who can make a contribution to the development of a sound program should be utilized.
- c) The thinking and conclusions of two or more genuinely interested persons with a good understanding of the problems and issues are likely to be more reliable than the conclusions of any one individual.
- d) The procedures used in solving a problem may be as important as the solution and should contribute to the growth and understanding of the participants.

8. *The major purpose of every individual and group should be to help improve public education.* The basic objective of any individual or group participating in any co-operative undertaking can be positive or negative, constructive or destructive. Such basic



objectives frequently are not stated—may not even be clearly recognized or admitted by the persons involved. However, they are very important and should be faced realistically. An individual may seek primarily to get greater prestige for himself, to block constructive action on a matter because of his extreme bias, or to accomplish other undesirable purposes. A group may be organized to keep down taxes regardless of the effect on the educational program, to control the public school program *its way*, or to promote private schools by discrediting public schools. Fortunately these are generally the exceptional situations. Persons who participate in any co-operative effort in this area should be willing to subscribe without reservation to the objective of improving public education.

9. *Informal co-operative effort should be recognized as just as significant and important as the more formal types.* The daily relations between pupils and teachers and the frequent contacts between parents and teachers and between lay citizens and educators afford the most common types of educational co-operation. Such informal relations can be helpful or harmful, can facilitate or handicap other types of co-operation, and therefore should be given careful consideration by all persons concerned. Considerable emphasis on developing desirable informal co-operation over a period of time should facilitate the more formal types involving committees and organizations.

10. *Citizen co-operation in improving the work of individual classrooms and schools should be considered fundamental.* Co-operative procedures should function on all levels and in a variety of ways. Certain things must be worked out on a system-wide, a state-wide, a regional, or a national basis if satisfactory progress is to be made. However, the teaching and learning take place in connection with the individual class and school the pupils attend. As noted in chapter v, here is the heart of the program. If teachers, pupils, and parents have learned to co-operate effectively in connection with the classroom work, they should be prepared to co-operate on problems involving the entire school, or the school system. Particular attention should be given in every community, therefore, to the development of constructive and meaningful teacher-pupil-parent co-operation in a variety of activities and projects.

11. *The kinds of co-operative activity which should be developed are those considered to be most appropriate and meaningful in each situation.* There is no one kind of co-operative activity which is most appropriate for all conditions and communities. Many times emphasis needs to be placed on better individual relations. Sometimes informal groups comprised of persons who find they have common interests will meet existing needs more readily than formally organized groups. The Parent-Teacher Association usually assumes some responsibilities that could not be assumed by any other group. In other situations a more formally organized citizens committee which can conduct specific studies or sponsor designated projects may also be desirable. Usually in any state or local school system there will be many kinds of co-operative activity, each designed to meet a particular need or to serve a specific purpose. Careful planning will usually be necessary to avoid competition and assure co-ordination.

12. *Co-operation should always be genuine and bona fide.* All citizens must have confidence in the integrity and sincerity of educators. It is equally fundamental that educators trust lay citizens and have confidence in their good intentions. Educators who place their own interests above all other considerations make co-operation difficult if not impossible. Similarly, other citizens groups who want merely to be critical, or to gain advantages for the group they represent, tend to obstruct co-operation. Mutual trust and confidence are essential for the success of any project.

13. *In so far as practicable, all co-operative projects should be co-operative from their beginning.* There are still some school leaders who believe they should determine the problems and arrive at their solutions, then ask individuals or groups merely to approve and help publicize their decisions. There is usually little basis for co-operation when any person or group is asked merely to approve conclusions previously reached by one person or his assistants. *An endeavor can be said to be truly co-operative when all persons who are to be directly involved in or affected by a decision are in position to participate directly or through their representatives in determining problems and issues, assembling and interpreting data, and arriving at conclusions in the light of all pertinent evidence.* In fact, there is no other sound basis for the relationships which are essen-

tial to the success of efforts involving co-operative activities in education.

14. *The procedure used in a co-operative program should be designed to assure that conclusions will be reached and decisions made on the basis of pertinent evidence and desirable objectives.* There is often a temptation for individuals or groups to discuss reports they have heard and to speculate on what they think are the facts instead of setting about systematically to assemble and consider all the evidence and reach conclusions on the basis of such evidence. Such rumors or reports may or may not be consistent with the facts. Conclusions should always be supported by the evidence. Careful study of all pertinent information is necessary as a basis for arriving at sound conclusions.

15. *In so far as practicable, decisions should be reached on the basis of consensus and agreement.* In co-operative procedure it is important that agreement be reached on all points if at all possible. If agreement cannot be reached in terms of the information available, the evidence should be restudied, additional evidence procured if necessary, and further efforts made to reach agreement at that time. Honest differences of opinion should be respected and carefully considered in an effort to find common points of view and agreement. *A major objective of any group should be to agree on proposals and recommendations which are so sound and logical that they will be generally accepted.* Such acceptance constitutes a good basis for assuring that the proposals can be satisfactorily implemented.

16. *The entire community (local or state) should be kept informed regarding activities and developments relating to citizen co-operation.* One of the most unfortunate things that could happen in connection with any co-operative undertaking would be for people generally to get the idea that something is going on about which they are not properly informed. The public likes to feel that developments pertaining to the public school program are matters of public information. Special effort should, therefore, be made to assure that all pertinent information is promptly made available in interesting form to the public and that the community is informed concerning all significant developments. The development of a satisfactory plan for seeing that this is accomplished is

an important responsibility of persons interested in the promotion of co-operative attitudes and activities in behalf of the schools.

17. *Leaders who understand and believe in co-operative procedures are essential.* Whether or not co-operation is possible at all or whether it works out satisfactorily and beneficially for all concerned will be determined to a great extent by the attitude of the leadership available. If the leaders are interested only in getting things done quickly or take the point of view that "educators are hired to run the schools," a satisfactory program of citizen co-operation for better schools is likely to be slow in developing. Neither is such a program likely to flourish under the "old-line" autocratic type of leadership. Co-operation works out most satisfactorily when it has the support of school officials and competent public leaders who understand and believe in co-operative procedures.

18. *Persons involved in co-operative projects should be broadly representative of all points of view in the community or state.* In carrying out a co-operative program there is sometimes a tendency to involve only adults, only the dominant social and economic group leaders, or only leaders of other select groups not representative of the community or of the state. The public schools are for the benefit of the entire population. Any program of citizen co-operation should, therefore, include persons representative of the entire population and of all points of view. Students, out-of-school youth, and low-economic-level and minority groups are most likely to be overlooked. But competent persons from all such groups have a contribution to make.

19. *Co-operative activities should be so planned as to be beneficial to the individuals and groups involved as well as to the public schools.* The objective of citizen co-operation is not just to arrive at the solution of problems regardless of the procedures used or of honest convictions which may have been disregarded. Instead, one of the objectives should be to help participants understand the entire situation better, to consider all points of view, and to reach sound conclusions in light of all factors which should be considered. The process is important because, if desirable procedures are used, all participants should become better citizens as a result of their experience.

20. *The possibilities of citizen co-operation should be explored before any other course is followed.* The co-operative approach to the solution of major educational problems should be the objective of all individuals and groups in a community or state. Problems differ greatly in nature. Problems pertaining to major policies may require co-operation on a community or state-wide basis. Others pertaining to internal affairs may require co-operation within the staff or school. Still others which are highly technical in nature may be solved on the basis of individual studies and research. Moreover, some kinds of co-operative procedure would come much nearer meeting the needs under particular circumstances than others. Co-operative practices should be utilized when they give reasonable promise of being advantageous, but they should not be considered a panacea.

There are situations where independent action by educators or by other citizens affords the best opportunity to serve the cause of education. Usually, however, that is not the case. As a general rule independent action should be decided upon only after all possibilities have been explored and every reasonable effort has been made to develop a co-operative approach.

21. *New groups or organizations should be established for purposes of citizen co-operation only when it becomes evident that the needs cannot be met satisfactorily through existing organizations.* There are already many groups and organizations which are interested in co-operating with the schools in one way or another. Many of these are making distinctive and valuable contributions. For example, no other group could meet the needs that are being met by the parent-teacher associations or by advisory groups for vocational and adult education in most communities and states. A study of the situation will often show that there are additional contributions that could be made by such organizations. However, problems arise from time to time which require a new or different kind of co-operation if they are to be satisfactorily resolved. A special group may be needed to give attention to a particular problem, or a community or state-wide group may be required to sponsor a comprehensive study or co-ordinate the efforts of several existing groups. In each case the needs should be carefully analyzed and appropriate procedures developed for meeting those needs most effectively.

22. *The board of education and school officials should give careful consideration to all proposals and recommendations growing out of the co-operative program and should approve those which seem to be for the best interest of the schools.* One of the outcomes of any type of co-operative activity is likely to be proposals for improvement of the public schools. If the participants believe that such proposals will receive careful and fair consideration, their efforts will be much greater than if they have serious doubt about the matter. It should be clearly understood, therefore, that the board (local or state) will consider all proposals relating to policies on their merits and will adopt those which seem to be sound and desirable. It should also be understood that school officials will follow a similar policy regarding proposals for improvements that might be effected without involving board policies.

23. *All persons and groups interested in any form of citizen co-operation should continuously seek to improve the procedures and outcomes.* Citizens need to learn how to work together more effectively. Some persons and some groups have made more progress than others. Every effort at citizen co-operation can be improved. Those engaged in the process should, therefore, be making a continuous and systematic appraisal of their own procedures and of the procedures used by the group in an effort to improve the process and outcomes and make co-operative activities more effective.

24. *The procedures used in co-operative activities should be consistent with fundamental principles but should be designed to meet the needs of the particular situation.* Unless appropriate basic principles are followed in developing plans for co-operative effort, difficulties are almost certain to be encountered. However, the basic principles are necessarily general and, therefore, cannot serve for specific guidance in working out the details of a co-operative program. The procedures used must, therefore, be designed to meet the needs, but there are certain criteria which should be used for general guidance.

### *Some Guides for Initiating Co-operative Procedures*

In many states and local school systems there has been relatively little co-operation except between the superintendent and the board

of education or between parents and teachers. Even though many citizens would like to know more about the school program and to help improve the schools, they frequently do not know how they can get started. Moreover, in many cases school boards and school personnel do not know how to initiate worth-while activities beyond the informal co-operation which is inevitable wherever there are public schools. The following criteria should provide some useful suggestions and guides for getting co-operative projects underway.

1. *The board of education should adopt a resolution expressing its interest in co-operative projects for the benefit of the schools.* Because of the strategic position of the board of education, it is essential that all citizens understand the position of the board with reference to various forms of co-operation. If there is any doubt about the attitude of the board, members of the professional staff may hesitate to encourage co-operative undertakings and other citizens may not know what reaction to expect when their proposals are made. If the board adopts an appropriate resolution expressing its interest in citizen co-operation, the process will be facilitated.

2. *The board and superintendent should take steps to interest professional personnel in co-operative procedures and to help them understand the process.* It is generally recognized that many teachers and principals have not had opportunity to learn how to work effectively with parents and other citizens. The tendency of the average person in education is to "go on the defensive" when some person makes a critical comment about the schools. When educators tend to react this way, the setting is unfavorable for co-operation. The ability to communicate freely and without misunderstanding is of major importance. The local superintendent and his staff should take whatever steps are necessary to help teachers work successfully with community groups. The state superintendent and his assistants should be prepared to help local school leaders work out constructive programs. All school personnel should be encouraged to read widely in the field, to study what other communities have done, and to attempt to arrive at an understanding of co-operative procedures.

3. *The administration should encourage lay citizens to become interested in and to assist with the co-operative process.* Most citizens have not had opportunity to learn to work effectively with school

personnel. Some of them are likely to approach the problem with the feeling that the school situation is too complex to understand. The better lay citizens understand the problems which need attention and the possibilities and difficulties inherent in co-operation, the more likely they are to function successfully as members of a co-operating group.

4. *There should be some indication that at least a few key educators and lay citizens are interested and want to co-operate.* Little can be accomplished unless at least some educators and some lay citizens believe that progress can best be made through co-operative effort. Exploring the possibilities and determining the bases which exist for co-operation may take time, but it should be carefully done. Co-operation is a good deal like student government. It does not come about just because an announcement is made that such procedures are being instituted. In practically every situation, however, some evidence of a willingness to co-operate can be discovered, and this can be used to good advantage.

5. *An informal committee might be encouraged to explore possibilities of co-operation and propose desirable activities.* Any such committee should probably be an informal voluntary group of people assembled on the basis of suggestions from citizens or at the suggestion of the board, superintendent, or staff. This group might well spend some time exploring problems and proposing desirable activities.

6. *The initiative for starting any co-operative activity may come from the board, from the superintendent, from the professional staff, or from the community.* Once the potentialities of co-operation are understood, there should be no hesitation on the part of board members, the administration, staff members, or lay citizens about suggesting possibilities for co-operation. What are needed at the beginning are good ideas regarding co-operative activities and possibilities. These ideas may come from almost any source—from a lay citizen, a teacher, an administrator, a university consultant, from some group, from the experience of some other community, or from the literature.

7. *The first co-operative project should usually be concerned with a problem or an issue in which there is considerable community interest.* The co-operative process usually comes as the result of mutual interest and success. If a beginning can be made on a



problem which is recognized as needing attention, there should be sufficient prospect of success to insure adequate participation on the part of different interest groups. It is the better policy to begin a co-operative project before the situation has become acute than to wait until a quick solution is imperative or until considerable controversy has arisen.

8. *A capable group or committee should be responsible for planning and guiding a co-operative project.* For the success of any co-operative project, it is essential that the committee in charge of the project be recognized by the people of the community as capable citizens who are sincerely interested in the public schools. In some cases an existing group may assume the responsibility. If a new committee is needed, the members should be selected in some appropriate manner. They should either be appointed or recognized by the board as the group responsible for the project.

9. *Qualifications of members should be agreed upon in advance and carefully observed in organizing a committee.* The basic qualifications for membership should include the following: (a) a genuine interest in public education; (b) honesty and sincerity of purpose; (c) the ability to recognize problems, interpret information fairly, and reach honest conclusions; and (d) relative freedom from strong biases that might interfere with the reaching of sound conclusions. If there are to be professional members on a committee, some of the professional members should have special competence in the field being studied, while others should have an interest in the entire field of education. This will help to assure an over-all point of view rather than the more restricted view of specialists.

10. *In some situations a committee or sponsoring group should be composed entirely of lay citizens; in others, it should include both laymen and educators.* If the committee is to be responsible for a comprehensive study of a state or local school system, it should probably be composed of lay citizens, with a competent educator as executive secretary or co-ordinator. Professional participation will usually come through special study committees, each of which should probably include both educators and laymen.

11. *A committee should generally consist of persons selected as competent individuals rather than as representatives of organizations.* Some committees which have been comprised of representatives of

organizations have functioned very well, but it is generally agreed that some problems may be avoided if organizational representation is not recognized. A person who represents an organization may feel that he has to speak for his organization and may have difficulty in considering problems from the viewpoint of community needs. There may be a place for some advisory committees consisting of organizational representatives, but study or policy committees should not be of that type.

12. *The procedure for nominating members should be such as to assure that competent persons are proposed.* There is no conclusive evidence thus far that any one procedure is superior to the others. In general, it seems that nominations for membership on local committees may come from high-school students, civic clubs, parent-teacher associations, school officials, or an informal committee organized for that purpose. On the state level, nominations may come from state organizations such as the congress of parents and teachers, the school board members association, and so on. It seems evident that nominations should generally not come exclusively from school officials. It is important to follow procedures which will result in developing a list of persons who are well qualified for such an undertaking and who are generally recognized as being desirable members of such a committee.

13. *The appointment procedure should be such as to assure that a committee will be representative of the community or state.* A committee should be appointed in some manner that will insure freedom from partisan politics or vested interests. At the state or local level, the appointment might well be made by the board of education. The persons appointed to the committee should constitute a good cross-section of their community. An informal conference with the nominee might well precede the sending out of an official letter of appointment.

14. *The procedure for the appointment of a committee to work on a school or classroom level should be kept as simple and informal as possible.* Most groups working with teachers on the problem of individual classrooms will be composed of the parents of the children in the classroom. Such committees should be organized with the cooperation of the teacher and principal concerned and need not be approved by the superintendent or board. Committees working with

individual schools on special problems should likewise be worked out through the principals and teachers.

15. *The size of a committee should be determined partly by the scope of its work and partly by principles of efficiency of operation.* If a committee is to study a specific problem, from about seven to fifteen members is usually considered to be an optimum size for proper functioning. If, however, the committee is to serve largely as a policy committee for a more comprehensive study or project, a somewhat larger membership may be in order. Generally, however, such committees should not exceed about fifteen to twenty-five persons. If there is to be a larger membership it probably will be necessary to have a small executive committee which will be responsible for handling most of the details in keeping with policy decisions made by the entire committee.

16. *A committee should be established for a definite purpose which should be stated in advance.* A committee may be established for a specific purpose or for a more general purpose. The purpose a committee is to serve and the general nature of its responsibilities should be made clear at the time it is organized.

17. *The term of service should be indicated by the appointment.* If a committee is appointed for a specific purpose such as to make a study of certain aspects of the school program, the term of service will naturally end when the study is completed. The time by which such a study is expected to be completed might well be specified in the appointment. If, however, the committee is appointed to serve as a policy committee to sponsor a series of studies or projects, the period of service for the entire committee should be indefinite, but the term for each member should be specified. The maximum term for a member should probably be three or four years with the terms so arranged that only one-third or one-fourth of the members are replaced each year.

18. *The group responsible for a project should reach general agreement on the roles of the constituent members.* All citizens should be in position to make a contribution to some co-operative project. While educators may have to take the initiative in assembling certain information, this should not be considered the exclusive prerogative of educators. Experience has shown that interested persons can assist with practically every phase of a project. Teams of

educators and other citizens frequently function more satisfactorily than when each group works in isolation. It is important, however, to have an understanding from the beginning as to how the group and its members are to work.

19. *The relations with the board and staff should be clearly defined and understood.* A committee of citizens should from the beginning clearly understand its relationship to the board of education. The board should take such steps as are necessary to assure that working relationships are fully defined and understood. No committee or group should expect to assume the responsibility for adopting and implementing policies for a school or a school system because, by law, the board is responsible for policies. As a matter of practical procedure, if the recommendations of a committee are sound, they will probably be approved by the board, but the discretion as to what is or is not to be done about adopting such recommendations must necessarily be left with the board. The group should have full responsibility for proceeding on a project in accordance with the plan it considers best, but of course any commitments for the expenditure of public funds must be authorized by the board.

20. *Provision should be made for meeting any necessary expense.* It is not customary to provide compensation for members of citizens committees who are serving the interests of the schools of their community. Provision should, however, be made for meeting travel and other expense incurred in connection with their work. Provision should also be made for other necessary expenses including the compensation of substitutes for school personnel assigned to devote a substantial portion of their time to the project and for secretarial, clerical, and technical assistance.

### *Some Guides for Carrying Out a Co-operative Program*

While certain criteria are more applicable to some types of activities than to others, the following should be useful for general guidance in carrying out all types of co-operative activities:

1. *Persons and groups participating in any co-operative effort should clearly understand their functions and limitations.* An understanding of what a group is expected to do and how far it is to go is essential from the very beginning of the activity. When a program

is being carried out with the co-operation of the board of education, the board should explain its conception of the responsibility of the group. If members of the group have any additional ideas, their proposals should be presented for the consideration of the board and a statement developed which represents agreement as to what is to be done.

2. *Any group or committee should have full latitude to explore all possibilities in its field.* Citizen groups usually have some difficulty envisioning possibilities beyond the present educational program and procedures. For this reason they should not be unnecessarily handicapped by restricting regulations or artificial conditions.

3. *The committee or group should organize properly for effective work.* For a simple undertaking there is no need to plan a complex organization, but some appropriate organization is necessary if the group is to function effectively. A group should usually select a chairman, a vice-chairman, a secretary, and, if necessary, an executive committee. Since the project is co-operative in nature, the chairman should take every possible step to assure that there is complete understanding and agreement at all times on the suitability and adequacy of the procedures being used. He cannot afford to be arbitrary or dictatorial but rather should serve as leader and co-ordinator for the group. The secretary should keep a record of the major decisions and agreements, copies of which will be distributed to all members of the committee following each meeting.

4. *Competent persons who understand and believe in co-operative endeavor should be selected for leadership roles.* A leader who displays little regard for the point of view of others or has little faith in co-operative activities is likely to impede the work of the committee. It is important, therefore, that persons be carefully selected or developed for leadership roles. They should be able to work well with others, to help each person make his maximum contribution, and to help stimulate interest in co-operative methods of improving the program of the schools.

5. *The committee should adopt a written statement of its purposes, policies, and working relations.* This statement should be consistent with the statement of policies and purposes as set forth in the resolution of the board, or, if there is no such resolution, should make clear the relations which must be preserved for an effective program.

A carefully worded statement which is approved by the entire committee is necessary as a basis for definite understanding on the part of all members of what the committee is to accomplish and how it is to proceed. This statement should clearly explain the purposes and scope of its assignment, the duties of committee members, and the policies to be followed in conducting the prescribed study or in carrying on some other kind of project.

6. *A committee which is responsible for a comprehensive study should serve principally as a policy committee.* Some policy committees have attempted to assign responsibility for specific aspects of the study to selected members of the group. In practice this procedure has generally not worked very satisfactorily because some committee members tend to get lost in details and fail to give proper attention to general policy. The central committee should determine all policies relating to problems for study, procedures, and conclusions. Study committees have frequently been organized around major problems such as the following: (a) resources, (b) organization and administration, (c) the instructional program, (d) staff personnel, (e) pupil personnel, (f) the school plant, (g) transportation, or (h) finance and business administration. Special committees have sometimes been organized for the study of the elementary-school program, the secondary-school program, vocational education, adult education, and so on. The policy committee responsible for a comprehensive study will not itself be able to carry out the details of each of the studies to be developed in connection with their program.

7. *The committee should endeavor to utilize all appropriate resources.* Usually it will be desirable for the members of a committee to do considerable reading in the field in which they are working. All such materials should be assembled and organized so they will be readily available for use. Many times human resources beyond the personnel of the committee will be found helpful. There are usually people available who know more about certain aspects of the problem at hand than the members of the group doing the work. Such persons should be located and their help sought in analyzing, understanding, and thinking through the problem. No appropriate resources of any type should be overlooked.

8. *The committee should select as consultants persons most com-*

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8. *The committee should select as consultants persons most com-*



*petent to work with the committee in a co-operative program.* For all studies at the state level and for many studies or projects at the local level the services of consultants will be needed. The persons who are selected to serve as consultants should be competent in the area in which they are to work, should be experts in working with groups, and should be expected to assist the working groups and the committee in analyzing problems, collecting data, and arriving at reliable conclusions. The consultants should not be expected to make the analyses themselves; they certainly should not determine the recommendations.

9. *The committee should proceed logically and scientifically.* In many situations there are likely to be about as many rumors and false leads as valid generalizations. After a committee has defined the problems in its area, it should proceed systematically to assemble the evidence to be used as a basis for agreeing upon conclusions and recommendations. The more scientifically the group proceeds, the better the prospects for a successful outcome. The emphasis should be on careful, systematic study and on avoidance of mere speculation and unsupported conclusions.

10. *Evidence concerning desirable objectives or the characteristics of a desirable program should be carefully assembled and used in evaluating the present situation.* In addition to assembling evidence concerning the present status of the aspect of the educational program with which it is concerned, each committee will have the responsibility of determining what is needed for a good program in its area. This step will require a canvass of the literature in the field, a study of the opinions of experts, and an analysis of the most promising practices and other constructive ideas as to what is necessary for the particular community or state. The information thus assembled should be used in evaluating the existing program and in planning improvements.

11. *Any co-operative project should be used to facilitate co-operative action in general.* It is important to recognize that, in a co-operative project, the objectives include the development of good leadership, the improvement of understanding, and the discovery of more effective ways of working together. The process may, therefore, become just as significant as the solution. For this reason, pro-

cedures which facilitate co-operative activities should be carefully observed at all times.

12. *Meetings should be open to the public.* It is essential that meetings of any co-operative committee should generally be open to the public. Steps should be taken, however, to assure that persons who attend such meetings understand that all possibilities are being explored and that tentative opinions may be expressed during the preliminary stages in order to insure consideration of all phases of the problem. The public should have access to all facts being considered by the committee.

13. *The committee should adopt a working plan with definite termination dates for various aspects of its program.* Unless such a plan is adopted, there is always the possibility that discussions will continue over such a long period of time that people may get the impression nothing is being accomplished. A working schedule should provide ample time for consideration of all phases of the problem, but a time limit for each phase should be established and observed. If the committee is responsible for planning and guiding a series of studies, the schedule will necessarily be somewhat more complicated and may need revision from time to time.

14. *The committee should meet as often as necessary to assure continuous progress.* It is particularly important that a committee meet when necessary to determine or approve the scope of the study or project or the information to be gathered and the procedures to be used, as well as the tentative summary and conclusions. The committee will want to satisfy itself that the study is properly planned and is proceeding satisfactorily toward completion. It will also want to allow ample time to review conclusions and recommendations to be sure the proposals are sound.

15. *The committee should emphasize the development of constructive proposals.* It is usually much easier to be critical than to propose constructive suggestions. A group that is merely critical, however, is likely to be destructive in its net effect rather than constructive. When the facts warrant criticism of any existing conditions there should be no hesitation about making such criticisms, but the criticisms should be accompanied by constructive proposals for effecting improvements.

16. *A co-operative group should seek to center attention on im-*

*portant principles and issues.* It is sometimes easier to deal in personalities than with fundamental principles or issues. However, any group which deals in personalities is almost certain to involve itself in difficulties. The constructive procedure involves facing issues and working out desirable solutions. When procedure is kept on this level, the outcomes are likely to be wholesome.

17. *A major objective should be to effect improvements in the educational program.* Every group engaged in co-operative activities should be interested in improving the educational program instead of merely making pronouncements. A statement of findings and conclusions may be useful, but if the work ends at that stage the accomplishments may be limited. The objective should be to propose practical plans for the improvement of the educational program and to assist the administration in effecting such improvements as are agreed upon.

18. *Generally, a committee should be expected to prepare a report explaining its analysis of the problem and giving its findings and conclusions.* Any such report should represent concurrence on the part of all members of the committee, even though assignments for preparing certain parts may have been divided among the members. The report should be reviewed by the committee and further changes made, if necessary, in order to clarify the statement. When agreement has been reached, the report should be presented or made available to the appropriate agency or organization, usually to the board of education and, as a general rule, to the public.

19. *All members of the committee should expect to assist in interpreting the report to the board and possibly to the public.* Any co-operative study or project will probably involve only a small proportion of the total population. Since all members of the committee will have taken part in carrying out the project and in preparing the report, they are in a good position to help interpret the report to the board and to the public.

## CHAPTER XI

### *Careful Appraisal Is Needed*

HAROLD C. HAND

AND

HERBERT M. HAMLIN

#### *Importance of Appraisal*

Much of our strength as a nation stems from the conviction of most Americans that nothing less than the best education that can be provided is good enough for the children, youth, and adults of each community and state. Because of this point of view, we reproach ourselves if we feel that in any important respect our schools are not *markedly better now than they were a few years ago*. Moreover, we are determined that they shall be better in the future than they are at the present time.

Most of us hold the same expectations with reference to the procedures used to improve the schools. We feel that *something is seriously wrong* if these procedures are not working better today than they did in the past, and are determined to make them operate even more satisfactorily in the future.

As one of the potentially fruitful means of improving the schools, citizen co-operation in all of its many forms is expected to be continuously improved. We expect it to be more effective today than it was yesterday, and to be even better tomorrow than it is today. This is simply another way of saying that all types and levels of co-operation in school affairs should be under systematic appraisal, either continuously or at frequent periodic intervals.

Some judgment or appraisal of developments is inevitable. Those who do not believe in the process or who are not satisfied with the outcomes are likely to be critical. Others may be enthusiastic about the same developments. Who is right? Such appraisals are often subjective and based on different points of view. Under such conditions,

varying conclusions may be expected. Much more objective and satisfactory bases for appraisal are desirable and, in fact, necessary as a means of helping to bring about needed improvements.

There are two basic general questions which should be raised by everyone concerned with citizen co-operation for better schools: (a) What is the effect on the public school program and (b) What is the effect on the participants? If the net effects in both instances are good or wholesome, the activity has undoubtedly been worth while; if not, the activity may have been useless or even harmful. But these questions, although fundamental, are too general to indicate particular problems or promising developments. More specific questions, such as those implied by the principles and criteria in chapter x, are needed. The development and use of such questions would be one good way for any school system or co-operating group to approach the problem of evaluation.

There are, however, three fundamental steps or procedures which are essential to satisfactory appraisal: (a) We should have clearly in mind *what to look for*, that is, what we should expect citizen co-operation in school affairs to accomplish, and how we think this co-operative program should be conducted. (b) We should look for (and know how to look for) the things that tell us whether we are accomplishing what we want to accomplish, and whether we are working together in the ways that promise to yield the best results. (c) We should make some sort of *record* of our appraisal so that later comparisons and estimates of progress will be possible. These three major steps are discussed in the ensuing sections of this chapter.

### *What To Look For*

All the things we expect citizen co-operation in school affairs to accomplish can be classified under the following statements:

1. We expect co-operation to help improve the educational program for the children, youth, and adults of the community.
2. We expect citizen co-operation to make the participants better able to help improve the educational program and more disposed to do so.

To be useful for appraisal purposes, each of these two big expectations must be spelled out somewhat. The first should be detailed in terms of (a) what we think a good educational program is or should do, and (b) what citizens should do to help provide such a program.

The second should be detailed in terms of (a) what conditions are necessary for a co-operative group (two or more persons) to work effectively and with benefit to members of the group and to the schools; and (b) what arrangements were made for citizen co-operation, and what the effects of these arrangements were on the participants and on the schools.

Illustrations of how each of these four jobs of detailing might be done and of things to look for at the local level are given on the following pages. It should be clearly understood, however, that the suggestions below are for illustrative purposes only and that each group will need to develop its own list. Similar steps should be taken and many similar points raised with reference to co-operation on the state or national level. To the extent that elements or conditions, such as any of those proposed, are deficient or lacking, there should be cause for alarm and a challenge for further analysis and improvements.

- d) In addition to serving all children and youth of elementary- and high-school age, it should in many communities provide adequate junior- or community-college facilities for all young adults who are interested in post-high-school education of less than senior-college grade.
- e) It should also provide whatever other educational facilities of less than senior-college grade the educational needs of the other interested adults of the community may require of the school in order to satisfy their vocational, civic, avocational, or other legitimate interests and aptitudes.

In the last analysis, citizen co-operation in school affairs can be regarded as desirable only if it attempts to help the schools accomplish purposes such as these, and can be judged effective only to the degree that such help is actually given. Anything accomplished through citizen co-operation which enables a person or group to become more capable of helping the schools attain such purposes and which creates a desire to provide such help should be chalked up on the credit side of the ledger.

#### WHAT CITIZENS SHOULD DO TO HELP THE SCHOOLS PROVIDE A GOOD PROGRAM

Every citizen should be interested in helping the schools provide a good educational program. Among the important things citizens should endeavor to learn or do are the following:

- a) They should secure an understanding of why it is that the public schools should do the things agreed upon and listed under the previous topic, such as serving well all the children and youth of elementary- and high-school age in the community, and should help as many others as possible acquire this basic understanding.
- b) They should seek to find out what the problems are as the schools attempt to measure up to acceptable criteria for good schools and should help to resolve these problems. For example, they should find out how many of the youth of high-school age actually are in high school, why it is that many youth either never entered or never graduated from high school, what things need to be done to remedy this situation, and how they can help to get these necessary things done.
- c) They should seek to find out what the problems are as the schools attempt to provide equal educational opportunities for all types of children and youth and should help to resolve these problems. For example, they should find out how adequately some particular group of pupils—say the hard-of-hearing—are being served, what needs to be done to make the education of these youngsters as good as it ought to be, and how to get these necessary things done.

- d) They should seek to find out what the problems of the schools are in respect to building community understanding and support of a sound program of education for character, health, civic participation, and home membership which is properly co-ordinated with the other educational agencies of the community and should help resolve these problems.
- e) They should seek to find out what the problems of the schools are in respect to building community understanding and support of a sound educational program for teaching the fundamentals of communication and number, for engendering a knowledge of the cultural heritage, and for providing other necessary kinds of training and should help resolve these problems.
- f) They should secure an understanding of the role of the junior college and of the need for junior-college and adult education in the community and should help as many others as possible acquire these understandings.
- g) They should help as many other people as possible find out what these problems really mean for the schools and should enlist their co-operation in helping to resolve the problems.

These proposals suggest the ends to which all kinds of lay-professional co-operation in school affairs should be directed. They suggest, then, some of the big things to look for in appraising the results of such co-operation.

#### CONDITIONS ESSENTIAL FOR EFFECTIVE CITIZEN CO-OPERATION

Means as well as ends are important, for they always determine the effectiveness with which the ends are achieved. In many instances, they may even subvert the ends sought. From this it follows that there are considerations in respect to means which we should look for in appraising citizen co-operation in school affairs. These considerations are virtually all embodied in the co-operative process itself, which, as the term implies, involves groups of two or more persons working together.

We know that certain conditions should be met if this process is to function smoothly. What these conditions are, then, constitutes what we should look for at this level of appraisal. Here are the principal conditions which should obtain:

- a) There should be adequate communication between the parties concerned.
  - 1) The persons involved must want to communicate with one another; this desire will be lasting only if there is a common understanding of the job to be done.



- 2) There must be a "common language" so that the persons concerned can communicate; the terms used must mean approximately the same to all.
  - 3) There must be abundant opportunities to communicate; face-to-face contacts and frequent association are necessary for this purpose.
- b) There should be agreement regarding the values on the basis of which judgments are to be made and action taken. If there is no such agreement, the co-operating parties will be working at cross purposes, and all sorts of unsatisfactory consequences will follow. The essence of "group belongingness" is the acceptance of the common purpose of the group; without this, the individuals involved cannot possibly pull together over the long haul.
- 1) This agreement, if it does not already exist, should be reached by consensus. If some do not accept the purpose, there will be a minority working at cross purposes with the majority. This can lead only to ineffectiveness and may easily result in the breaking up of the group.
  - 2) Consensus comes from patiently and tactfully studying the situation and "talking it out," never from the steam-roller tactics of a majority overriding a minority.
- c) The goal of the co-operating group should be a compelling one; it must be regarded by everyone as worth working for. No sensible person will persistently work hard at something he thinks is not worth doing.
- d) The level of aspiration should be realistic; the group should not "bite off more than it can chew." We know that nothing succeeds like success. If the group experiences very much in the way of failure, it will soon break up. What it attempts to do must be big enough or difficult enough to be worth doing, but not so big or so difficult as to make failure almost as likely as success.
- e) The level of aspiration should be kept flexible at the "talk stage" so that later, if need be, it can be lowered somewhat without the group feeling that this constitutes either failure or an admission of failure on its part. At the talk stage the difficulties are frequently not fully apparent, nor is the actual magnitude of the task usually perceived accurately. In the action phase these usually become apparent rather soon. The group should feel no firm commitment as to the "size of the bite" until it is far enough along in the action phase to be quite realistic about what it is undertaking.
- f) The nature of what the group sets out to do should be something which those who make the final decision are not likely to reject. Communication and understanding are important at all stages. If a group proceeds to work out something in good faith and is then blocked, either

it will dissolve in frustration or persist only as a pressure group or opposition body. Such consequences are apt to be corrosive of good school-community relations.

- g) The co-operating group should feel that it is getting somewhere, or it will fall apart. This means that it must keep itself "on the beam" in respect to an undertaking which it feels is worth doing.
- b) The distribution of tasks within the group should be guided by much the same principle. Individual members of the group can be expected to drop out if they feel that they are wasting their time or if they are asked to do things which are too difficult for them to accomplish successfully.
- i) For maximum productivity, the individuals comprising the co-operating group should see their individual undertakings as necessary components of the central task set by the total group.
- j) If the group is to continue to hold together and to function, it should have a succession of tasks which it wants to accomplish. Most desirably, these tasks should be interrelated; the first should be antecedent to the second, the second to the third, and so on.
- k) There should be a strong group feeling if members of a group are to work together constructively and to function at their maximum effectiveness. This feeling is facilitated if the group operates democratically by defining its purposes and shaping its plans on the basis of consensus, if each member of the group has some opportunity for leadership on some aspect of the problem, and if his contributions are approvingly recognized by his fellows.
- l) The productiveness of a group is improved through careful self-appraisal. To be most useful, this self-appraisal should be provided for in some systematic way either at the very outset or very shortly after the co-operating group is formed. The group should make definite and adequate provisions for systematic self-appraisal which take account of the purposes or ends of the group and the way in which it operates.

#### PLANNING FOR CITIZEN CO-OPERATION

We have thus far suggested what one should look for in appraising citizens groups in respect to their purposes and their interpersonal relationships. In addition, experience has taught us that certain conditions should obtain in organizing lay groups and in the way in which they relate themselves to the schools. These conditions are indicated by many of the questions presented in the following list. All of these questions are applicable to the larger groups such as parent-teacher associations, citizens committees, and the education committees of lay organizations. Those which are suitable for the

smaller and quite informal groups, such as a teacher and the parents of his pupils, should be apparent upon inspection.

a) How was the arrangement effected?

- (1) Were all who might be affected by the arrangement (or their representatives) consulted?
- (2) Were the specific needs for the arrangement and the purposes to be accomplished by it determined before the arrangement was made?
- (3) Were the relationships to existing organizations determined?
- (4) Were competent consultants used in planning an over-all structure of school and community relationships?
- (5) Was the arrangement chosen because of its adaptability to the community or was it copied from another and different community?
- (6) Did the board of education initiate or approve the arrangement in an adequate statement of policy?
- (7) Did the organized school staff concur in the arrangement?
- (8) Were those included as representatives of the people really representative of them? If not, has there been real effort to include more representative persons?
- (9) Is each person participating in the arrangement a free individual or is he responsible to a group or an individual?
- (10) Is there a charter, constitution, or other document which indicates clearly the field in which this particular kind of co-operation is to function, its purposes, its restrictions, and its relationships?

b) What are the purposes of the participants?

- (1) Are the participants "pure in heart," seeking only the best education for the children, youth, and adults of the district?
- (2) Do the participants see their central task clearly and work consistently upon it?
- (3) Are adequate time and thought given to refining the particular purposes and goals to be sought?
- (4) Do all participants understand and accept the stated purposes? Are new participants inducted into an understanding of them?
- (5) Are the purposes feasible?
- (6) Is there frequent appraisal of progress toward accepted goals?
- (7) Do the purposes have to do with the major goals or objectives of public education or are they confined to details of conducting a traditionally conceived school system?

c) How is the arrangement operated?

- (1) Do the participants continuously and systematically appraise their work? Have appraisals improved their work?
- (2) Is the work of the participants planned as far in advance as is feasible?

- (3) Is the planning carried out democratically?
  - (4) Is the work of the group planned in relation to the work of other groups which are responsible for or interested in the schools?
  - (5) Are democratic discussion procedures principally used in meetings? Are minority groups and individuals protected in their rights to self-expression?
  - (6) Has the group become a study group, which marshals facts and considerations before announcing its conclusions?
  - (7) Are the interests and abilities of all participants well utilized?
  - (8) Do participants attend meetings regularly?
  - (9) Is there adequate use of consultants?
  - (10) Are adequate records kept? Is the work of the group properly reported to those who should know about it?
  - (11) Does the group stay within its prescribed field?
  - (12) Does the group always recognize the rights and responsibilities of lay citizens, the board of education, administrators, teachers, and nonacademic employees?
- d) What have been the effects of the arrangement upon the participants?
- (1) Have the participants developed an increased interest in those who are served or might be served by the schools, in the schools, and in the work of the particular group?
  - (2) Is there more widespread and more active participation in the work of the group?
  - (3) Do the members of the group feel increasingly that their work is necessary, perhaps indispensable?
  - (4) Do the members increasingly appreciate the privilege of membership in the group?
  - (5) Do the members increasingly enjoy working together?
  - (6) Are the members learning? Are their visions widening? Are they becoming more accurate and objective in their thinking about school affairs?
  - (7) Do laymen and schoolmen appreciate each other more and like each other better? increasingly enjoy being and working together?
  - (8) Are the leadership tasks being better performed? Is new leadership developing?
  - (9) Do the members contribute new and fresh ideas about the schools and education?
  - (10) Do the members want to communicate their new ideas and radiate their new enthusiasms to their fellow laymen and teachers?
  - (11) Has the group developed the courage of its convictions?
- e) What have been the effects of the arrangement upon education in the district?
- (1) Have some of the possible gains or goals proposed for the school program been attained?
  - (2) Are the group and its work increasingly understood and supported by professional workers and citizens in the district?

- (3) Is the group helping to develop closer relationships between the schools and the organizations and institutions of the district?
- (4) Has the group helped to develop in the people of the district and in the professional staff a less complacent attitude toward the schools, caused them to become more constructively critical, made the schools seem more important to them, and made them more appreciative of the good things the schools do?
- (5) Has the group helped the people of the district to become able to do what they can for themselves in school matters and to rely less upon outside agencies?
- (6) Has long-range planning for the schools been promoted?
- (7) Have new needs for education been discovered in the district and related to the program of the schools? Have any activities been discovered which are no longer needed?

Not all arrangements for citizen co-operation have proved to be helpful. The time has come for careful studies of various arrangements which will result in the improvement of the best and the elimination of the worst. Much more research by local, state, and national groups might well be directed toward determining the effects on the schools of citizen participation in school affairs and of the many different arrangements for providing it.

The questions that have been raised in this section suggest one means of evaluating the purposes and activities of the many lay organizations that indicate an interest in the schools. Many of these groups have been very constructive and helpful. On the other hand, some obviously do not want to work with professional personnel; a few are not representative and do not want to become representative; others think they know what the schools should be and see no need for further study.

School officials and professional workers have often stood aside while groups of all kinds organized, when, instead, they might have invited representative citizens to co-operate with them in ways that would be good for the schools, for the public, and for the educational profession. There are tested ways of organizing independent as well as school-sponsored citizens groups to work with boards of education, administrators, teachers, and nonacademic employees.<sup>1</sup>

1. See: *How We Can Organize for Better Schools* (New York: National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, 1953); also, Herbert M. Hamlin, *A Charter for a System of School-sponsored Citizens Committees* (Urbana, Illinois: Office of Field Services, College of Education, University of Illinois, 1953).

The important question is not: Should lay citizens participate with professional workers in school affairs? It is: How shall citizens participate with them? Viewed from the standpoint of the layman, the same reasoning applies. Lay citizens have the power to make school policies, but they cannot make policies which are good for themselves and their children without professional advice and they cannot execute policies except through the medium of school personnel.

### *How To Look for Important Things*

Persons who are concerned with evaluation need to know when, where, and how to look for evidence concerning (a) improvements in the school program and (b) the functioning of the group which is interested in these improvements.

#### EVIDENCE CONCERNING IMPROVEMENTS IN THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

*When To Look.* Let us first deal with the question of when we should look for significant evidence concerning the schools which can be used in evaluating citizen co-operation. A simple illustration will suggest the answer. Let us suppose that a businessman makes a New Year's resolution to try to reduce his weight by twenty-five pounds during the ensuing year. He will certainly weigh himself before he begins to reduce. He will also step on the scales from time to time during the year to see how he is doing, that is, to see how his weight compares with what it had been. And, if he hasn't already achieved his goal before that time, he will also weigh himself at the end of the year. Only by weighing himself at these different times could he know where he began, how he was doing, and to what extent he succeeded in getting rid of the pounds he wanted to lose. However, this businessman will do more than look at the weights. He must also keep in good health and from time to time he will want to check on himself or have himself checked to make sure that no other important objectives are being neglected.

If a citizens group really wants to know whether it is making progress, it needs to know what the situation was when the group started, and what it is now as compared with what it was then. If the parent-teacher association is just starting out on a one-year project—to help improve the association, let us say—it needs to nail down cer-

tain facts about the parent-teacher association right now if, one year later, it is going to *know* instead of *guess* whether or not it has succeeded. And if it wants to know how it is doing halfway through the year, it will need to take notice of the same set of facts about the association at that time.

Unless it is willing to proceed more or less in the dark, a citizens group should look for and record the significant facts about its undertaking and itself at the beginning, at one or more times during the operations, and at the conclusion of the undertaking. Provisions for doing this looking and recording should, from the very outset, be made an integral part of the plans. The group should recognize that appraisal of the school program or of any phase of it is not a simple or an easy process. It should be carefully planned and carried out with competent professional guidance.

*Where and How To Look.* This brings us to the question of where we should look for pertinent evidence. Common sense tells us we must look where the evidence is. If a citizens group is attempting to help the high school improve its citizenship program, the group must get its "now" evidence from pertinent school records, from current observations by teachers, parents, other citizens, and by the youngsters themselves of pupil behavior in significant citizenship situations—in school, at home, on the streets, in business establishments, down town, and the like. Later, it should go to the same sources for the same kinds of information in order to see in what respects and by how much the situation has been improved.

Or let us suppose that the education committee of some civic organization is co-operating with the school in improving its vocational-guidance program. One of the activities planned may be a careers day followed by conferences in which boys and girls learn firsthand from workers in various occupations what these occupations require by way of preparation, what one does in them, what possibilities for service and for advancement they afford, and so on. If this education committee really wants to know whether its help is effective it will build into its plans certain provisions for securing evidence from the pupils, their parents, the school, and from the businessmen, professional men, and skilled workers who take part in the undertaking.

By means of questionnaires the committee could find out what the

unanswered questions and perplexities of the students were before the careers-day enterprise was undertaken and the extent to which these were resolved or reduced by the project. "Before and after" interviews with a few randomly selected pupils could be utilized for the same purpose. These pencil-and-paper devices could be prepared by a joint committee of teachers and members of the education committee, or the latter could, with propriety, suggest that the school assume the full responsibility. Similarly, the "before and after" interviews might be jointly conducted, or they might be made the school's responsibility.

Randomly selected parents might also be queried before and after the careers-day undertaking in respect to significant things about their sons and daughters—what occupational plans did these youngsters indicate and how sensible and carefully thought out did these plans appear to be before and after the careers-day conferences? These sample inquiries might be made through interviews or by simple correspondence forms, either by members of the education committee or by school counselors at the suggestion of the committee.

The occupational representatives with whom the pupil conferences were held might well be queried both before and after the undertaking in respect to their appraisals of their own adequacy to give the kinds of help which should be provided and their estimates of the worth of the enterprise. Any losses in respect to self-confidence and any lowering of value estimates which might occur would suggest preventive measures that should be taken another time. Any gains in these respects would supply useful information for persuading still larger numbers of citizens to participate.

Or let us suppose that the parents and teachers of a junior high school have teamed up for purposes of improving the noon-lunch situation in their school. The first thing their plan should provide is that reasonably exact facts bearing on the present situation be determined: facts about the time allowed the youngsters, the serving arrangements, the choice of dishes offered, the dietary balance represented by the food which the pupils choose, the prices charged, sanitary provisions, behavior in the lunchroom, and whatever else may be pertinent. Comments about the lunch situation made by pupils at home might also be solicited from the parents as another part



of the baseline or "before" data. The opinions of the pupils might be directly solicited through a simple questionnaire. Parents and teachers might similarly be queried if it seems desirable to do so. With such diagnostic evidence in their possession, the parents and teachers will not have to guess what is right and what is in need of improvement. And if, after completing their improvement project, the parents and teachers were to secure a similar body of facts, they would know in what respects and to what extent they had helped to improve the lunch situation.

In these illustrations we have noted but a few of the many ways in which evidence pertinent for appraisal purposes may be secured. We have mentioned school records, observations, questionnaires, interviews, and simple surveys as promising sources or ways of getting needed evidence. Others are minutes of meetings, resolutions, progress reports, school visits, test results, newspaper files, correspondence, conferences, pooling of judgments, logs, tape recordings, evaluation sheets, and special evaluation sessions of the group. Obviously, some of these sources and ways are pertinent for the appraising of some undertakings, but not for others. In all instances, however, it is likely that two, three, or more of these sources or ways would be useful.

#### EVIDENCE CONCERNING THE FUNCTIONING OF THE GROUP

Thus far in this section all of our suggestions have been on the substantive side—all have dealt directly with improvements in the school. We must not let ourselves lose sight of the fact, however, that none of these or any related improvements are likely to be undertaken unless the citizens group pays enough attention to its functioning to make and keep itself a cohesive and productive group. For this reason, every such group should appraise itself in this respect, and every member should have a systematic plan for appraising his own contributions.

Naturally, the things to be looked for are all to be found within the group itself. Ideally, this kind of evidence should be sought and kept in mind at all times. At the minimum, it should be sought and utilized at frequent intervals.

The principal things which the group should look for within itself have previously been indicated, but particularly important are

these: Is there enough common understanding of the work or purposes of the group, enough agreement in respect to terminology, and enough in the way of face-to-face contacts to insure adequate communication? Do the members of the group feel themselves dedicated to achieving the same values or purposes? Do they feel that what they are attempting is worth doing and that it can be accomplished? Do they see what they are now doing as one part of a larger ongoing task? Are all important decisions arrived at by genuine consensus? Is there a strong "we" feeling? Has the group properly related itself to the board of education and to the personnel of the school? Has it properly delimited its task and does it keep within its proper bounds? In all they do, are its members motivated by a desire to improve the schools? Are all recommendations based on careful and objective factual study? Does the group seem to be improving as time passes?

The group can secure this important evidence about itself in various ways. Which it utilizes should be a matter of genuine consensus. One way is to have some competent member of the group serve as an observer of the way the group is operating and then to call on this member from time to time to present his observations for group discussion. Another is to have some member serve as a recorder for the group and, from time to time, to review and discuss what the record reveals about the way the group is functioning. A third method is to have tape or wire recordings made of the group meetings, then devote part of a meeting at periodic intervals to listening to the playbacks and to analyzing and discussing what they reveal about the functioning of the group. A fourth way of securing such evidence is to devise an opinionnaire or evaluation sheet which embodies questions pertaining to the way in which the group is operating.

Groups whose members are quite familiar with group dynamics and quite secure in respect to one another not infrequently find it useful to employ sociometric devices which reveal the patterns of interaction which are taking place.

A sympathetic outside consultant who knows how to work with co-operative groups and with whom the members of a group feel quite secure will often be able to help them identify their strengths and weaknesses as a group without embarrassment to anyone. Con-

sultants can frequently be found among such groups as the more recently trained members of the clergy, personnel workers in business and industry, YMCA and YWCA leaders, guidance counselors in the schools, and faculty members of colleges and universities.

One thing can be said with certainty in respect to what evidence about itself a group should secure and utilize. Only that evidence should be obtained which is needed for evaluation and which can be used in improving the functioning of the group and the contributions of its members.

### *Recording the Things That Are Significant*

Obviously, much of the usefulness of the evidence which a group may secure is lost unless this information is recorded. Vague impressions of "how things were then" are about all that a group will have to go on if, without records, it attempts one or two years later to make a "then versus now" comparison. To make matters worse, these vague memories will frequently be contradictory in character—a fact which easily leads to misunderstandings disruptive of the peace of the group and corrosive of its effectiveness. However large or small and whatever the character of the citizens group may be, it should, at the beginning, make definite provisions for the systematic recording of pertinent facts about its work and about its own inner workings.

To be systematic, these records need not be at all elaborate. Dated memoranda on 3 X 5 cards or small sheets of paper of what was agreed upon or done in each of the conferences between a parent and the teacher of his child will afford most of the baseline data which such a pair needs in order to check up on itself at any time. Complete and carefully filed minutes, with evidence obtained by the group and included as exhibits, will include much if not most of what a citizens committee, the education committee of a lay organization, or a parent-teacher association will need for systematic self-appraisal. A file of pertinent, dated newspaper clippings is not difficult to maintain. Significant resolutions, progress reports, correspondence, notes of observations, and interview and survey results can easily be dated and filed in some easily accessible schematic way; most desirably, they should be included as exhibits in the regularly approved and filed minutes of the group. Test results and school

records are regularly and systematically on file in the school. Tape recordings are not difficult to date and file. Neither are the summaries of evaluation sheets.

All in all, what it principally takes to have records which will enable a citizens group to check up on itself and evaluate its own progress whenever it wishes to do so are such things as (a) the awareness that complete records are important, (b) a determination to see to it that such records are kept, (c) carefully planned provisions for securing, dating, and filing pertinent evidence, (d) the selection of someone with a "sense of history" to preside over the records, and (e) warm and steady group appreciation for the work of record-keeping—with this last point made unmistakably clear to the secretary of the group.

## CHAPTER XII

### *We Can Learn To Co-operate More Effectively*

HENRY TOY, JR.

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#### *Can Co-operation Be Learned?*

Co-operation among persons and groups is an exceedingly complex process. Those who have worked with a variety of boards, committees, study groups, councils and clubs know that some succeed and some fail. Some generate good will and satisfaction; others, distrust and disappointment. Indeed, any given group may vary from one such extreme to the other during its existence. It is obvious that better understanding of the process of co-operation and better skill in its use would be helpful to practically everyone.

The fact is that we still have much to learn about co-operative procedures and about how people learn to co-operate effectively. As pointed out in previous chapters, much progress has been made in and through citizen co-operation in education. There is, however, urgent need for more systematic and intelligent attention to the problem of preparing people and institutions for better co-operation. This chapter is intended to encourage people to study and think more about the matter of citizen co-operation for better schools with the hope that our knowledge and techniques will be improved and better co-operation will result.

Fortunately, we have learned much about co-operation from experience and research in recent years. We have a more intelligent understanding of what promotes co-operation. We know more about the difficulties, the resistances, and the various causes of resistance. Most encouraging of all, we have come to recognize that *co-operation calls for attitudes and skills which can be learned* by everyone who desires to do so.

### *Who Should Learn To Co-operate?*

There isn't a person who does not need to co-operate in some way with one or more persons many times every day. Those who do not know how to co-operate are misfits in the home, in the school, in business, and in government. In fact, our social and economic structure, our institutions, and our government are all organized on the premise that most people will co-operate voluntarily for the benefit of all. Any mass failure to co-operate in essentials would soon result in anarchy and chaos.

These statements do not imply that everyone should be expected to become a "yes" man with no mind of his own. Quite the contrary is true. Under the most wholesome conditions, each person stands for what he considers just and right. He co-operates when he thinks co-operation is best and opposes when he can find no basis for agreement or when some principle is at stake. There is a time and place for wholesome, positive opposition. In the interest of progress, however, the objectives of all should be to attempt to find valid bases for agreement and co-operation instead of consciously seeking to disagree.

From the moment we face the need to share our toys and to play with other infants, our daily lives are filled with opportunities for learning and practicing co-operation. Whenever we deal with other persons, the attitudes and skills involved in co-operation may be needed. The effectiveness of the educational program depends to a great extent on how well teachers and pupils, teachers and the administrative staff, the administrative staff and the board, and professional personnel and other citizens co-operate to facilitate learning and teaching, to develop policies and procedures, and, in fact, to improve all aspects of education.

Instruction in the co-operative processes should be a conscious concern of education at all levels. After all, co-operation is the warp and woof of education in a democratic society. As our understanding of the teaching-learning process improves, as it progresses beyond the simple stage of mass lecture-recitation, of lock-step routine, of uniform assignments, of unquestioning drill and memory feats—then it must inevitably be recognized that an "artist teacher" is a master of the theory and techniques of co-operation.

The learning of co-operation should start with children in the home, continue in the elementary and secondary schools and the colleges, and extend to the parents and other adults. We live in one great country and can be successful in our aim only if all citizens from every section of the country learn how to co-operate and to appreciate the importance of co-operation in education.

### *What Can We Learn about Co-operation?*

As previously pointed out, co-operation is merely a process in which two or more persons collaborate because they see a mutual advantage in doing so. If people are to be prepared for co-operative activity, several general objectives must be kept in mind: (a) the cultivation of appropriate attitudes, basic beliefs, and values; (b) the accumulation of knowledge about the possibilities and limitations of co-operative activity; and (c) the development of skills and techniques essential to group work.

#### THE CULTIVATION OF ATTITUDES, BELIEFS, AND VALUES

The foundation for genuine co-operation lies in one's attitude toward other people, in one's belief in the worth of the possible contributions of others, in one's personal value system. Stated in familiar terms, some of the parts of the foundation are humility, courage, sincerity, integrity, democratic sympathies, and a sense of proportion.

Humility is at the core of the democratic process. Respect for the opinions of others, however awkwardly these opinions may be expressed or reasoned, is an essential factor in co-operation. Surely not one of us can believe himself so certain of what is right that he can dismiss the views of any other person who has gained an understanding of even a small part of the truth.

Each member of the group must be sincere, must be honest in working toward the common objective. It would be destructive to the group's aims if any member decided to follow his own personal bent and achieve his own personal ends to the detriment of the common goal.

Integrity is a problem which each member of the group must solve for himself. The relationship of the individual to the group with which he is working is complex. The individual must not completely subordinate his own personality or his own needs and in-

terests to those of the group. However, his ideas on how group purposes may be put into effect should be expressed to the group, not broadcast outside it. He must try to convince the group of the soundness of his views. If the group should not agree with him and if he is still convinced of the overwhelming importance of his view, then he may have to withdraw in order to work for his own ideas. An extremely important quality in most group situations is the possession of an adequate sense of proportion. Whenever two or more people work together, incidents which are disturbing to the co-operating parties are likely to arise. The ability to see such happenings as *incidents* is helpful in continuing successful co-operative activity. A proper sense of proportion is also necessary in making the adjustments so important in the co-operative process. The ability to see what is vital and what may be yielded without serious loss is one which helps to make group decision-making an efficient and orderly affair rather than an occasion for bitter wrangling.

#### THE ACCUMULATION OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES AND LIMITATIONS OF CO-OPERATIVE ACTIVITY

People who are well prepared for co-operative work have either a theoretical or a working understanding of the relationship of means to ends in a democratic society, or both. As children grow to youths, to young adults, and to mature members of the community, they should have continued opportunity to develop a logical, consistent point of view about the possibilities and limitations of co-operative activity.

It seems obvious that an essential feature of education should be conscious attention to developing in people an understanding of the real meaning of both individual initiative and co-operation in groups. Persons who understand the relation between competition and co-operation, between selfishness and generosity, between the role of the specialist and that of the layman, between authoritarianism and democracy, are likely to see citizen co-operation for the public schools in proper perspective.

The very heart of democratic living, and of co-operation, lies in a proper understanding of the place of compromise. We are told that we must never "compromise" our principles, but this does



not mean we should stubbornly hold to a point of view on a detail regardless of what happens to a basic principle. For want of the ability or willingness to recognize merit in a proposal regarding means, a fundamental principle may be lost. Co-operation is impossible without the ability to see the merit in different points of view and to appreciate their essential honesty. It is the very essence of democracy to encourage genuine free enterprise in ideas. Only our totalitarian enemies encourage ideological uniformity.

The discussion of principles and criteria in chapter x constitutes an excellent summation of what research, experience, and theory have contributed to our knowledge of co-operative endeavor.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES ESSENTIAL TO GROUP WORK

There is a growing body of knowledge concerning the skills, techniques, organizational patterns and related devices appropriate to co-operation in many fields. Inquiries into the dynamics of groups, the nature of communication, the problems of semantics, social and individual psychology, the effect of the physical and psychic environment—these and other exciting efforts are adding so much to the available useful know-how that the information provided can no longer be ignored as a proper concern of education.

*Learning from Difficulties.* Just as the medical scientists learn better how to keep us healthy by studying disease, and as automotive engineers learn how to make better cars by analyzing breakdowns, so we can profit by studying failures or difficulties in co-operative effort.

Experience shows that co-operation among citizens is often handicapped because professional personnel tend to (a) go on the defensive at the slightest suggestion of criticism; (b) use theoretical pedagogical terms unnecessarily and thus retard two-way communication; (c) express concern or alarm over unorthodox suggestions instead of exploring the ideas fully and encouraging the proponent to think through the implications; and (d) have a "vested interest" complex. On the other hand, lay citizens often tend to (a) generalize and reach conclusions without sufficient facts; (b) consider school problems to be simpler and easier to solve than is actually the case; and (c) think of present-day schools very much

in terms of their own school experience. Organizations, both lay and professional, often tend to operate as pressure groups rather than as study groups, and institutions tend to follow traditional patterns, with emphasis on techniques rather than on understandings.

*Theory and Practical Experience.* Much can be learned about the skills and techniques essential for co-operative effort by studying the literature and the results of research projects. Many excellent "guides" have been developed, some of which are cited in this yearbook. All of this information should be useful to persons interested in co-operative procedures. But experience is also a good teacher, and one of the best ways to supplement what has been learned from books is to engage in a challenging co-operative project.

Here are a few practical observations and suggestions concerning points of view and techniques based on the experiences of many individuals and groups.

1. People are likely to be co-operative when they have common interests with their friends and when co-operation appears to be advantageous to all concerned.
2. Persons who have not previously worked together usually need time to learn to co-operate effectively.
3. Points of view, assumptions, attitudes, and even prejudices should be discussed and recognized. Unless this can be done informally and frankly, they are likely to cause difficulty sooner or later.
4. Agreement as to the goals of a co-operative project is important. The unifying effect of a clear goal, a popular idea, or an emotional appeal is startling. Compacts, charters, or simple memoranda setting forth clearly the tasks individuals and groups face can do much to promote co-operation by keeping effort and attention focused.
5. Without adequate communication, co-operation is always difficult. Within recent years a great deal has been learned about the critical role played by various kinds of communication in co-operative effort. For example, rumor flourishes where communication is poor.
6. One-way communication is not enough. Co-operation flourishes upon "listening" as much as upon "telling." This is especially important for persons in leadership positions. Moreover, a group should not rely too heavily upon any one means of communication. Various approaches should be used.
7. Words may mean different things to different people. A special effort should, therefore, be made to assure that they are properly understood by all. For example, to some, "the fundamentals" may mean only the

three R's; to others, character, citizenship, and many other ideas may be included.

8. There is no substitute for *facts* to help the cause of co-operative activity. Groups and individuals should heed well the advice to begin the attack on every problem by asking, "Is this true?" "What can we find out about this for sure?" "What are the facts?" "Do we have all sides of the question?"
9. Proposals for improvement are almost certain to encounter resistance from vested interest groups. On some issues, established groups within the community will have set positions determined frequently by state, national, or international bodies. Understanding is the best safeguard but is no guarantee against opposition.
10. In a sense, interest in the public welfare may be really self-interest more intelligently conceived. It may be self-interest as seen with binoculars, with a longer view and a wider focus. It can mean the sacrifice of immediate personal interest to long-term personal welfare, or it may really be a thoroughly altruistic sacrifice of personal interest to the common good.
11. There should always be agreement as to the limits of authority and responsibility. Too frequently co-operation is handicapped by a lack of understanding on the part of the group as to the limits of their authority and responsibility.

*Skill in Conducting Meetings.* The members of a group as well as the leader have responsibilities for the success of a meeting or other undertaking of the group. There are many important techniques to be learned by all. The following questions suggest some of them.

1. Does the chairman or leader invite the exchange of ideas, encouraging the contribution of each to the final result?
2. Does the chairman have a sense of "timing," knowing how to sense the need of the group for time to discuss at one point and for a decision at another? Are there written agendas to serve as a guide?
3. What about the time and place for meetings? Are they held in comfortable settings which encourage free discussion? How is the lighting? Does it contribute to eyestrain and tension or lull people to sleep?
4. Are refreshments provided in such a manner that they aid the group process by engendering a relaxed approach, or do they interrupt the steady flow of progress?
5. Do the leader and the participant understand and practice simple parliamentary procedures? Do they realize the power of agreement by consensus?
6. Do the participants feel secure enough to keep the discussion at the

level of *ideas* and to deal with differences at the same level rather than at the personal level?

7. Is there sufficient follow-up after each meeting so that a sense of progress or, at least, of action is maintained?

There is strong evidence that, once the attitudes and skills suggested above have been learned, they are transferable to other aspects of co-operation. At home, in school, in church, at work, or in recreational and community activities the basic attitudes and skills involved in co-operation are the same. This is important to remember.

During the past few years, we have become somewhat self-conscious concerning the whole process of co-operation; at the same time we have gained confidence through knowledge and understanding. Rather than blundering our way from expedient to expedient in group activity on a trial-and-error basis, we are discovering the elements involved. We have satisfied ourselves that those elements can be taught and learned and that such learning can take place at most age levels and at various stages of human development. Consequently, the role of the educator or the lay leader who is interested in helping others learn more about co-operation emerges as a key to future development.

### *How Can We Learn To Co-operate?*

There is no easy formula which can be followed in learning how to co-operate. If we learn some of the essentials as children, we should be in a much better position to co-operate effectively as adults. If citizens generally learn about the methods of co-operation and follow these methods in the attempt to help the schools, more progress will be made than if we depend on trial-and-error procedures.

#### HOW CHILDREN AND YOUTH ARE LEARNING TO CO-OPERATE

No one can seriously question the importance of the childhood years in developing basic behavior patterns. Both in-school and out-of-school opportunities to learn about co-operation are essential; and they are becoming available in greater numbers of communities yearly. Here are several outstanding examples of practice. Some others will be found in chapters v and vi.

a) *Elementary-School Level*

1. Children from various grades plan special assembly and class projects with the help of their teacher and carry out these plans with the assistance of townsmen having special knowledge and skills or possessing exhibits appropriate to the topic at hand.
2. In some kindergartens and nursery schools, mothers assist the teachers in field trips, lunchroom duty, swimming-pool supervision, party-days, and the like. Indeed, if the example of co-operation set at this level of school experience were carried through the higher levels, much would be gained.
3. In some elementary schools, there are regular joint meetings of the student council and the executive committee of the school's parent-teacher association. Here is an excellent method for training children in the procedures of co-operation!

b) *High-School and Adolescent Groups*

1. High-school pupils, parents, and teachers join together to conduct an inventory of adults in the community who have special talents, interests, and rare possessions. The human-resources file so developed is consulted by pupils, classes, and teachers when special assistance in school work is needed. The story of one such development is told in the pamphlet, *Fifty Teachers in Every Classroom*.<sup>1</sup>
2. Well-run Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops are excellent examples of co-operative endeavor involving youth and adults, the latter consisting of laymen and professionals.
3. The development of "teen canteens" and similar youth centers by groups of teen-agers, teachers, and other citizens is another outstanding example. Note, also, their management is assigned to a joint youth-adult board of directors.
4. In one city school system, the superintendent of schools meets monthly with representatives of the student councils of the city high schools. They discuss the welfare of the school system and other problems of mutual interest. Occasionally, a member of the school board is present.
5. In some high schools, leadership clubs are set up for instructing class officers, club officers, and other student leaders in the techniques of group leadership.
6. The Citizenship Education Project at Teachers College, Columbia University, is working with hundreds of school systems and colleges throughout the country in discovering, developing, and spreading improved techniques by which teachers may stimulate students to learn the concepts and skills appropriate to our American democratic way of life.

1. Metropolitan School Study Council Committee on Human Resources, *Fifty Teachers in Every Classroom*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1950.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS TO LEARN HOW TO CO-OPERATE

At the adult level, examples of school-community co-operation are multiplying so fast that the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools has found it difficult to keep an accurate inventory. At last count, there were, exclusive of parent-teacher associations, more than 2,000 local groups of laymen and professionals interested in co-operative projects in public education which were in regular communication with the Commission.

Encouraging co-operation between laymen and professional educators is a keystone of the Commission's procedure. For example, the Commission, from the very beginning, recognized the need for facts as a basis for studying various educational problems. One such problem was that of school finance. To get those facts, the Commission sought the assistance of a distinguished group of specialists in educational finance, members of the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration, to prepare a summary of research in the field. This report was recently published with the aid of Commission funds as a book entitled *Problems and Issues in Public School Finance*.<sup>2</sup> Other groups, including the United States Chamber of Commerce, the United States Office of Education, Phi Delta Kappa, and the Committee on Tax Education and School Finance of the National Education Association have co-operated similarly to provide research data that would not otherwise be available. The Commission is now engaged in reworking these and other reports into short, popularized pamphlets which will be made available to the thousands of local co-operating groups throughout the country.

Many other national groups interested in education are helping to prepare lay and educational leaders for more effective co-operation in meeting the needs of the schools. The contributions of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers have been particularly significant. In fact, every organization which is discussed in chapter ix and many others have helped in some way to prepare lay leaders for co-operation with school personnel.

2. Available through the Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York 27, New York.

Practically every state congress of parents and teachers holds leadership schools or training conferences of some type, often in co-operation with some college or university. Several states have citizens committees, many of which are concerned with stimulating and helping local groups. Several schools or departments of education and teachers colleges have established school board institutes to help administrators and board members learn to work more effectively as a team,<sup>3</sup> and others have organized conferences and training programs on citizen co-operation in education.<sup>4</sup>

At the local level, the adult-education program in many communities has been expanding rapidly and in some cases has provided leadership training for co-operative programs. Local citizens committees, advisory groups, business-education days, and provisions for reporting on the progress of pupils through conferences with parents, to cite a few illustrations, have helped greatly with the process of school-community co-operation.

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATORS TO LEARN CO-OPERATIVE PROCEDURES

The educator, too, must be prepared for lay-professional co-operation. Educational leaders have long pointed out the fact that, although the teacher is expected to teach the ways of co-operative action, rarely has he been given more than a taste of the co-operative method either in his preservice training or within the school system in which he is employed.

What signs are there that the pervasiveness of co-operative activity in our daily lives is having an effect upon the selection, basic professional preparation, and continued development of educators? Is teacher education being modified? What of the preparation of school administrators? of the organization and administration of the professional schools themselves?

*Preservice Education of Teachers.* Actually there is a great deal of questioning, experimentation, and adjustment in teacher educa-

3. For example, Teachers College of Columbia University, University of Pittsburgh, Southern Illinois University, and Syracuse University. The Midwest Administrative Center for the Co-operative Program in Educational Administration has established a special project on board-administrator relations and functions.

4. For example, the University of California at Berkeley.

tion. The following statement from an early report of the Commission on Teacher Education indicates the trend:

Because the work of teachers is characteristically carried on in vital social surroundings, it is important that they should be skilled in collaborating with others in thinking, choosing, and acting in sensitive response to a total, changing scene. Children, colleagues, and laymen each bring their own knowledge and attitudes to given situations and react to developments accordingly. . . . Good teaching in our time calls for skill in so working with others as to promote intelligent agreements as to what "we" need to do in order to attain "our ends in the situation in which we find ourselves."<sup>5</sup>

Subsequent reports<sup>6</sup> of the Commission deal with the improvement of teacher education, and throughout the text runs a single thread—the need for developing the attitudes and skills of co-operation. It would be inaccurate, however, to state that all teacher education has been recast in the new mold. Some desirable changes are being effected, but the pace is discouragingly slow.

Where progress is being made, certain newer emphases can be seen in the better preservice programs of teachers.

1. *There is participation at appropriate levels by the students.* The student council has a real share of responsibility and authority. Within the limits set by bona fide professional requirements, students have a voice in discussing and choosing group and individual activities. One sees effectively operating class-planning committees, student consultations with laymen, some of whom are specialists in their fields, and similar examples of firsthand experience with group activities, including lay-professional co-operation. Student experiences include work with parent-teacher associations and other lay groups. Students are also invited to sit in on the administrator's cabinet meetings, which include both teachers and administrators. Such experiences in co-operation build in the future teacher an interest in the co-operative method and the rudiments of the skills necessary for co-operative group work.
2. *Instruction in group work, human relations, and communication arts is required.* Instruction is a balance of classroom discussion, individual study, and directed field experience. For example, students may volunteer for service as leaders of such community groups as the boy or girl scouts, YMCA, YWCA, Sunday schools, settlement houses, recrea-

5. *Teachers for Our Times*, p. 161. Washington: Commission on Teacher Education, American Council on Education, 1944.

6. See: *The Improvement of Teacher Education: A Final Report by the Commission on Teacher Education*. Washington: American Council on Education, 1946.



tional clubs. They may address community groups, preside at meetings, assist in preparing and presenting reports. Their experiences in such activities serve as material for class discussion.

3. *More attention is being paid to instruction in the foundations of education in American democracy.* This is essential if the prospective teachers are to develop a sound point of view concerning group endeavor. No teacher can be well prepared and yet be ignorant of the complex tapestry of Western thought; no teacher can fail to appreciate the values of lay-professional co-operation after having studied the diverse contributions which have gone into making Western man what he is today.
4. *A better job of reconciling the old dualism between content and method is noted.* Both are important to a teacher. Curriculums of the professional schools themselves are being strengthened, and methods of co-operation with liberal-arts colleges and with graduate divisions of universities are being developed.

*In-Service Education of Teachers.* The in-service education of teachers for co-operation presents even a more complex problem. Currently it is generally accepted that teachers, in order to keep professionally alive, should continue their own development on a regular but less intensive basis while they are on the job. But the pattern for such development is typically quite unsuited to the acquisition of skill in co-operation with lay citizens. Intensive summer-session courses and part-time courses during the academic year on campus or in extension centers are frequently conducted by the professors as lecture series with outside reading hoped for but not really expected.

The appearance of "workshops" and "work conferences" on the scene has brought us a step closer to actual co-operative practice in professional education. However, a genuine workshop situation is rather rare. Too often the name refers to an intensified lecture series by "experts," combined with so-called discussion groups dominated by "experts," all wrapped up in day-long sessions over a period of a week or so. Thorough practice in group activity is still absent in most cases.

Even in-service institutes, courses, and workshops organized within a local school system too often exhibit the same weaknesses. A consultant is employed who makes regular appearances and dominates the scene. The teachers usually expect him to provide the problems and to outline the methods of their solution.

Even worse are those cases where no attempt of any kind is made, within the school system, to continue the professional development of teachers and where the administration is so autocratic that a combination of fear, frustration, compliance, and covert griping combine to provide the worst possible seedbed for the germination and growth of co-operation.

However, there are a number of challenging developments in the field of in-service education. All over the country new methods are springing up which may be the key to future progress. Here are a few examples:

1. The board of education recognizes the value of local initiative and locally centered problems in the professional development of teachers. It appropriates a generous in-service education fund to be expended in any manner recommended by a joint administration-teacher council. It authorizes school time for such activities, either through employing substitutes or dismissing school when desired.
  2. The teachers in a school system arrange with a neighboring professional school to provide them with a consultant skilled in directing group activities to advise them on their procedures for co-operation.
  3. Professional school courses and seminars on group projects are increasingly popular.
  4. In Lewis County, New York, the Board of Co-operative Services<sup>7</sup> appropriated money on a two-year basis to join with the Co-operative Program in Educational Administration in the Middle Atlantic Region in trying yet another approach to the matter. A man with extensive training and experience in group work was added to the staff of the superintendent of the Co-operative Board. An important part of his task was to bring the local administrators, teachers, students, and laymen into a working relationship on school improvement. An advisory committee composed of an official representative of each of five professional schools in New York State met regularly with the local steering committee.
- The record of accomplishment during the first year of this combination of resources was very impressive and thought-provoking. Administrators met and discussed common problems freely for the first time. Faculty meetings became so engrossing that teachers did not want to leave. Board members are proud and happy. Lay citizens are volunteering their services. Here, indeed, is a splendid example of co-
7. A county school board composed of the presidents of several local boards who have joined together in a federation to purchase, co-operatively, school services which each district alone could not otherwise afford.

operation of laymen, administrators, teachers, pupils, and a group of professional schools.<sup>8</sup>

*Preparation of Administrators.* The problems faced in selecting, preparing, and promoting the in-service development of school administrators are similar to the ones discussed above. However, it is probably fair to say that the need for improvement is even more urgent because of the leadership status and opportunity afforded the school executive.

The recognition of this problem and need led to the establishment, in 1950, of the *Co-operative Program in Educational Administration*, sponsored by professional organizations and financed by an initial grant of about four and one-half million dollars from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. In those regions where a study of the job of the administrator was undertaken as a basis for beginning attempts at improvement, one of the common shortcomings and needs recognized by school executives was skill in human relations, in group work, in communication, and in similar aspects of lay-professional co-operation. Their overwhelming testimony was that their jobs were becoming vastly more complex and that multiplying group contacts both within and outside the school system were a prime cause.<sup>9</sup>

Some of the promising developments are summarized below:<sup>10</sup>

1. The joint project of the Co-operative Program in Educational Administration and a Board of Co-operative Services in New York State was not only concerned with the in-service education of teachers but was also *equally* concerned with studying the role of the administrator in the process and the most effective ways for tapping the resources of great university professional schools.
2. Another approach was through seminars on group work and human relations started in several universities—for example, Syracuse University and Teachers College, Columbia University—primarily pointed toward administrators both in basic preparation and on the job.
3. A series of administrative clinics was sponsored jointly by the Co-op-

8. *Second Annual Report of the Co-operative Program in Educational Administration, Middle Atlantic Region*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952.

9. *First Annual Report of the Co-operative Program in Educational Administration, Middle Atlantic Region*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1951.

10. *First and Second Annual Reports, op. cit.*

leges has operated smoothly and has set up a comprehensive plan for including laymen, board members, members of the state education department, professional associations of administrators, teachers, pupils, and university faculty members in the enterprise.

### *What Is the Outlook for Coming Years?*

Although the idea may still be disturbing to some, it should be obvious that professional educators can no longer expect to run the schools according to their own notions and then report to the people about some of the things that are happening. Such a procedure has always been inconsistent with the concept of public school education in a democracy, where the schools belong to the people.

During the past few years, we have come to realize more clearly than ever before that both lay citizens and professional educators are responsible for the public schools and that the program must be co-operatively planned. We have made much progress in co-operation but still have much to learn. There are still some educators and some lay citizens who do not have much faith in the process and many who know little about the techniques and procedures involved.

Experience has shown that people can learn to co-operate effectively and advantageously on school problems. Much is already known about the techniques and procedures involved, but thus far it is known by too few people. Many are still attempting to proceed on a trial-and-error basis, with the result that some damaging mistakes are being made.

Fortunately, more and more teacher-education institutions are beginning to revise their programs to give prospective teachers training and practice in co-operation with lay citizens. Many institutions which prepare or work with administrators and administrative staff members are moving away from the authoritarian lecture procedures and are designing programs which place considerable emphasis on school-community co-operation. Public school programs are being revised to help young people learn more about co-operative activities without neglecting to emphasize the place of individual endeavor. Many groups of adults, state and local citizens committees, and often adult classes are helping to prepare

lay citizens for co-operation. While the habits and customs of past generations are not easily or quickly modified, considerable progress is being made in this regard.

Thus, the way is being prepared for more general and more effective co-operation in the future. This development should result in greater recognition of the needs of the schools and more prompt improvements, in effective safeguards against pressure groups interested only in their own ends, and in better understanding and support for the public school program. Citizen co-operation will not solve all the problems of the schools, but, if wisely carried out, it should help to solve many of them and to avoid others which might become more serious than those faced at present.

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